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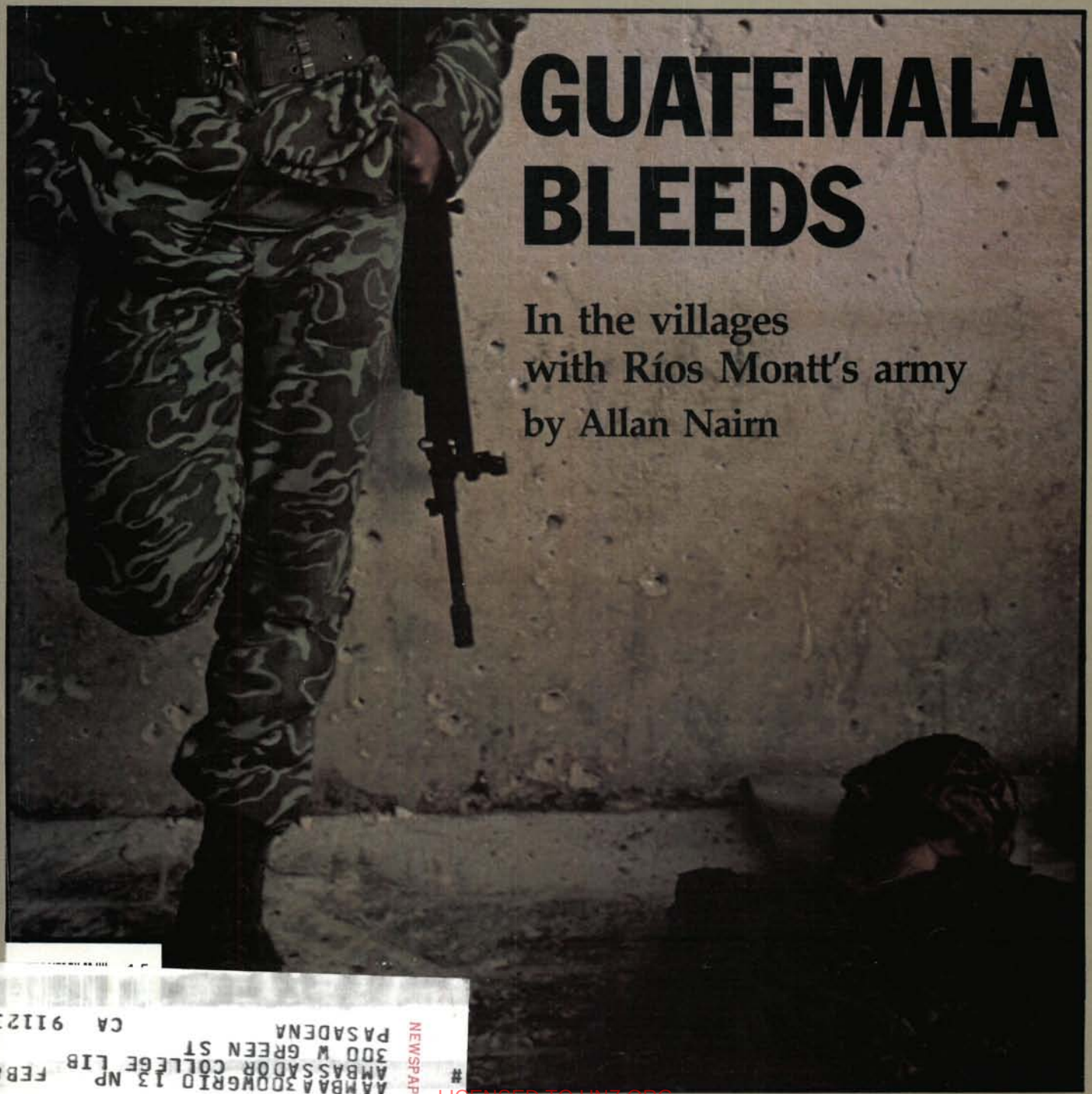

GUATEMALA BLEEDS

In the villages with Ríos Montt's army

by Allan Nairn

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CORRESPONDENCE

BANK ACCOUNTS

To the editors:
Three cheers for William J. Quirk's "The Big Bank Bailout" (TNR, February 21). So much explosive truth packed into a single article sweeps away the hypocrisies and evasions of America's banking elite with the impact of a tornado. I was one of the wounded in the big bailout of the '20s. Indeed, I would like to paper a doghouse for a certain broker with the South American bonds he persuaded me to buy. Now I feel better. Not since the New Deal nursed the banks back to health have I encountered such good, straight talk about the financial world. Bravo Professor Quirk! Bravo THE NEW REPUBLIC! Veblen, thou shouldst be living at this hour.

DAVID L. GRAHAM
Freeport, Maine

To the editors:
It is certainly unusual to see THE NEW REPUBLIC print a piece that easily could have appeared on the editorial page of *The Wall Street Journal*. William J. Quirk condemns the irresponsible lending of the big banks. How come a liberal magazine becomes such a ferocious free marketeer when the "bad guys" are in the dock?

Mr. Quirk hounds the debtor countries. He claims that "much of the borrowing was by corrupt regimes for their own purposes, which included oppressing the people now asked to pay." It takes no special analytical talent to berate Zaire and Argentina. But if the oil-importing developing countries were wasting all their money on cattle prods and thumbscrews, how come they have achieved an annual growth rate of 4.6 percent since 1973, versus 2.5 percent in the industrial world?

Mr. Quirk also claims that the banks are all looking for a bailout from the taxpayers. But he makes no mention of the fact that I.M.F. loans to the big debtors (Mexico, Brazil, etc.) are conditional on matching loans by the commercial banks. If anything, the banks are being "bailed-in" by the I.M.F. (and its member governments), which is why the financial rescue packages for debtor countries are taking so long to put together.

In his discussion of World War I debts and German war reparations, Mr. Quirk makes no reference to the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930. That tariff legislation, an act of economic warfare by the United States against the rest of the world, did more than anything else to transform a business downturn into the Great Depression. The German bonds did not go bad because of nefarious deeds by First National City Bank; they went bad because of a decline by more than one-half in world trade, caused by protectionist actions of the U.S. Congress. Mr. Quirk's own views on the subject are very strange indeed.

CHRISTOPHER A. KOJM
Foreign Policy Association
New York, New York

CHURCH POLITICS

To the editors:
I am not clear about what Patrick Glynn means in "Pulpit Politics" (TNR, March 14). Does Mr. Glynn contend that the Catholic Church should not be expressing views on such issues as poverty, hunger, and world peace?

DAVID A. LEVITT
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:
The Catholic Church is prolife in many ways. Christ died so that we could live. If we did not take a stand against nuclear war, we could not call ourselves Christians.

JENNIFER LEUBE
Chico, California

EXPOSING STIEGLITZ

To the editors:
In his review of the Alfred Stieglitz exhibition at the National Gallery of Art and *Alfred Stieglitz: Photographs and Writings* (TNR, March 7), Ronald Paulson states that, although "denied by the co-author," Georgia O'Keeffe "undoubtedly exerted some influence on the selection of photographs and the texts." For the record, I would like to repeat what we previously told Paulson: Mr. Hamilton and I selected the photographs both for the exhibition and the book. We informed Miss O'Keeffe of our decisions, but she did not ask

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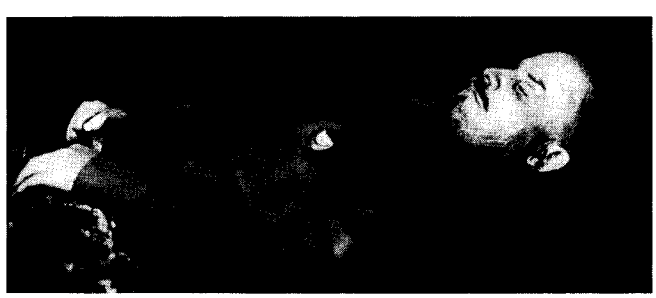
To keep the Revolution alive, Russia couldn't let him die.



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FROM WASHINGTON

REAGAN'S HOLY WAR

The menace is Russian militarism. Ronald Reagan is out to scare Congress, scare America, and scare Western Europe with the danger. The immediate problem is how much of a U.S. arms buildup is justified to counter the menace. A big increase, but how big? Behind that is another problem. The United States is pledged to a massive deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe if Moscow doesn't cut back its own weapons. Here too the question is one of degree: Reagan wants Russia to take out *all* its missiles, the "Zero Option"; our allies would seem content with something less complete. They now press Washington to make a milder counteroffer. There's a tentative deadline for the great East-West deployment showdown at the end of the year; that's the climax toward which we're moving.

One thing at stake is Reagan's credibility. We put a burden on our President beyond that of other democratic nations; can Reagan sustain it? Other countries would have a team, a Cabinet, a political party; in Washington it's pretty much the President alone. He is engaged in a delicate process, trying to overawe Russia while keeping his own international coalition behind him. Russia seems to be as much afraid of us as we are of them. Meanwhile we watch Reagan. Is he losing momentum?

The President's foreign affairs speech, press deputy Larry Speakes told us March 22, comes "at a critical juncture in our national discussion of security issues" in the face of "the threat now confronting us." What threat? reporters asked. "The relentless buildup of the Soviet Union's capabilities in Europe and elsewhere," said Speakes. The appeal comes, of course, just as Congress debates the Reagan $245.3 billion military budget. He wants a 10 percent expansion over the current rate; Democratic leaders want a more modest 4 percent.

The President's credibility is threatened by his vehemence. National leaders ask if he is a wise man to follow. Most people now agree that his effort to limit the Russian gas pipeline was a mistake. Can we trust a man who told the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida "there is sin and evil in the world and we are enjoined by Scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might"? Those who advocate a mutual freeze on new nuclear weapons, he said, "ignore the aggressive instincts of an evil empire."

It is not my purpose to point out that this sounds like a prescription for holy war, part of a strategy Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times* describes as "using a sectarian religion to sell a political program." The question is whether the President can keep confidence in his leadership at home and abroad with this kind of primitive prose and apocalyptic symbolism. Here is the *London Economist* on the matter: "It cannot in the end be wise for a President to tie himself too confidently to divine principle on matters of policy. . . . The President, moreover, failed to explain how it could be morally permissible to seek an understanding with the Soviet Union, which he undertook to do, if the Soviet Union was, indeed, the source of evil, the anti-Christ."

The mood around the Reagan Administration affects its response in various fields. It is erratic and simplistic; it is sometimes antigovernment, antiregulation, anti-environmentalist. The President has a tendency to put people in charge of federal agencies who oppose the agencies' missions. This seems to have been true of the E.P.A. It affects the Administration's negotiations with Russia in Geneva, and its dealings in Central America. Recently the President named Kenneth Adelman to head the troubled Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. A conscientious Congressman, Paul Simon, Democrat of Illinois, who worked with Adelman at the U.N.'s Special Session on Disarmament last year, observed: "I know Ken Adelman and I like him. He is able, has a good mind, and if he were nominated for Assistant Secretary of Defense or Secretary of Transportation, I would testify for him. But he has no more business being the head of the Arms Control Agency that I have of being head of the Republican National Committee. He is philosophically in the other camp."

Or take Central America. "We are blind to believe that supplying helicopters and weapons and Green Beret training is the way to solve the problems in San Salvador," says former U.S. Ambassador Murat Williams. "You just don't solve social problems by military means. You can't keep the lid on the boiling cauldron of popular aspiration by using machetes and guns. Our government has been unwilling to recognize this fact. A lot has to do with the basic philosophy of the Reagan Administration, which is that we are in a confrontation with the Soviet Union. It is all wrong to let our policies be determined by fear." On the same theme, veteran John B. Oakes, writing in *The New York Times*, says the United States is involved in a "no-win situation reminiscent of Vietnam. Washington is committed to a military-controlled government, attempting to suppress an indigenous revolution growing out of social, political, and economic chaos."

I look at Ronald Reagan and wonder. I find him personally good-tempered in a job that would be too big for anyone. Can he hold the situation together? Europe fears he is trigger-happy, a "cowboy," and asks if his advisers are realistic. There are great hopes for Secretary of State George Shultz. He testified before a Senate subcommittee on March 22, on the murder of three American nuns and a lay worker in El Salvador in December 1980. The national guardsmen accused in the crime are yet to be tried. We looked Shultz over. It was a trying, emotional issue, but he stayed calm. True, he didn't have the answers, but he kept his cool. These days that is a lot.

According to a *Time* magazine poll taken in March, 70 percent of all Americans "agree that Reagan represents the interests of the rich rather than the average American." In June 1982 only 58 percent felt that way. I don't put too much faith in polls. I was burned in the 1948 election, when Harry Truman fooled us all (and TRB had to wait sheepishly for a predated piece to come out explaining what Tom Dewey would do as President). If jobs and prosperity return, then Reagan's popularity will rise again too. But so what? Polls won't mean much if we can't halt the present ugly deterioration of relations with the Soviets.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
APRIL 11, 1983

WEINBERGER'S WAR

The Marine Commandant in Beirut, General Robert H. Barrow, has complained in a well-publicized private communication to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger that Israeli troops have persistently "harassed, endangered, and degraded" American peacekeeping forces stationed in Lebanon. The General says the Israelis have done this for "obtuse political purposes." Doubtless he meant obscure; and the political purposes of alleged Israeli provocations are obscure indeed. No one has adequately explained what possible reason the Israelis might have to bring harm to U.S. military personnel. The killing or wounding of a uniformed American by a uniformed Israeli, however inadvertent, would be a catastrophe for American-Israeli relations, and the Israelis know it.

What is not obscure is why Mr. Weinberger would welcome yet another political confrontation with Israel. He long ago became the voice of the Arab view—particularly the Saudi Arabian view—of the Middle East, and has seized every opportunity to stigmatize Israel as an ingrate. (Recall, for example, his castigation of Israel for insisting that the weapons intelligence from the Lebanese war it would share with us not be shared with its enemies.) General Barrow's charges that Israeli behavior in Lebanon had put Americans in "life-threatening situations, replete with verbal degradation of the officers, their uniform, and country," and that "incidents of this nature are the rule, rather than the exception," seem to support Mr. Weinberger's animus. The Marine document was leaked almost as soon as it was dispatched. But even discounting its author's weakness for rhetorical excess, the evidence that is mustered in the General's letter, and in backgrounders subsequently, does not support his accusations.

The truth is that after more than six months in Lebanon there have been only a few incidents, none of them serious, almost all of them occurring long ago and before the scrupulous Moshe Arens displaced the provocative Ariel Sharon as Defense Minister. Moreover, it is now clear that in some of the old incidents, and particularly the High Noon episode revolving around Captain Johnson, it was our troops that had crossed, albeit innocently, Israeli lines; an eyewitness account by David Zucchino of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on February 3 disproved the Pentagon's testy account of the event. The two recent incidents cited by General Barrow show how he had to scrounge for examples to make any case at all. They do not involve Americans in the American unit with the Beirut peacekeeping forces, but U.S. personnel and other nationals attached to U.N.T.S.O., the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization that has resided in Lebanon for a generation. Given U.N.T.S.O.'s sorry record, the Israelis are entitled to demand the strictest observance of formalities.

It is clear, nonetheless, that tempers are short in the Beirut theater; and it is more than likely that cocky Israeli soldiers have added to the tensions experienced by inexperienced troops sent there to police an unusual no-war, no-peace situation. But it is ironic that the Pentagon fusillade against Israel was launched in the very days when a series of terrorist attacks against the various peacekeeping forces, including U.S. forces, demonstrated just how dangerous a place Lebanon is; and no one, after all, has suggested that these attacks originated from the Israeli side of the demarcation lines. Who, then, is the enemy of American and other Western forces in Lebanon? Does Mr. Weinberger really not know?

Contiguous troop details inevitably pose hazards to one another. This is the case even of detachments wearing the same country's uniforms. The number of men tragically killed by one of their own in confusing circumstances is legion. For some reason, Mr. Weinberger insists that the circumstances of the abutting American and Israeli remain as confusing as possible. No untoward incidents have been reported between Israelis and the French, Italian, and now British units stationed in Lebanon. For between these European contingents and Israeli forces near Lebanon there is precisely the kind of consistent liaison relations that Mr. Weinberger has assiduously refused to permit between our troops and those of our ally. It is prudent to have written agreements on demarcation lines, and this too, in his eagerness to endear himself in Riyadh, Mr. Weinberger has prevented. There has always been an ex-

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ception, for example, to the interdict against U.S.-P.L.O. relations, and this exception has been established by Washington to secure the safety of American personnel. But what has long been acceptable as a mode of contact with the P.L.O. in the field is apparently not acceptable to Mr. Weinberger as a mode of contact with the Israelis in Lebanon. Mr. Weinberger's fanaticism may endanger the lives of those American troops on behalf of whose safety General Barrow's letter is said to have been written.

It has been widely known in Washington that the Marines did not covet their Beirut assignment. At first Mr. Weinberger did not want any American troops in Lebanon. Recall that immediately after the P.L.O. departed Beirut, but before the political situation had stabilized, Mr. Weinberger pulled our forces out of Lebanon, only to have to return them later. Now it is proposed that more American troops go to Lebanon for an indefinite, but clearly very long, time. They would be sent to do for Israel and for Lebanon what Israel, at least, would much prefer Israelis and Lebanese to do themselves. Many more American troops will now go to Lebanon, then, in order to appease some unappeasable Saudi sensitivity.

Let it be clear, however, that American lives are likely to be lost in this enterprise. If we are not ready to have our men die—as Israeli troops and some Lebanese troops, too, are ready to die—in the work of preventing the reinfiltration of southern Lebanon by P.L.O. forces, then we should not be so eager to foreclose precisely those political and military arrangements that would make it unnecessary for American lives to be at risk.

All this may look like a lot of bickering, like a petty problem of public relations, but there is a principle at stake. Mr. Weinberger is doing nothing less than distorting the character of the American-Israeli relationship. In a report from Washington, James McCartney of the Knight-Ridder News Service put his finger on the problem. The Defense Department, he wrote, perceives "the United States as an ally of the Lebanese government. The Israelis, in effect, are not U.S. allies." This is precisely Mr. Weinberger's position. About Lebanon, it has some plausibility (in seeking to rid Lebanon of all occupying forces, the Pentagon may protest, the United States cannot side with any of them), but it is nevertheless a mistake. Contrary to Mr. Weinberger's distortions, the United States and Israel are allies, and in Lebanon, too. The regional benefits of Operation Peace in Galilee accrued to Israel, but its global benefits accrued to the United States. The President understands that there is a coincidence of interests in Lebanon, as his friend from Bechtel does not.

It is Mr. Weinberger, then, who acts from obtuse political purposes. These purposes are to transform an alliance into something less. The Pentagon's policy in Lebanon may be characterized as evenhandedness in action. Unfortunately Mr. Weinberger has the power to influence reality. A few phony confrontations, a few carefully appointed leaks, and pretty soon American-Israeli relations are in another "crisis." This time, however, something more than diplomacy will be endangered by the pro-Saudi agenda. Mr. Weinberger's predisposition to find wisdom in Riyadh and folly in Jerusalem may result in the reversal of American gains, and the loss of American lives. The situation in Lebanon may look nasty now, but if Mr. Weinberger gets his way, and the Israelis withdraw, and the Syrians do not, and the P.L.O. is emboldened to return, and the Lebanese Army cannot keep the peace, the real nastiness will begin. The removal of the Israelis from the front line may only bring more American troops to Lebanon and pit them against terrorists trying to make use of the opportunity with which the Pentagon's foolish pressure will have furnished them. Why would anybody want to do that? It is time for the President and the Secretary of State to retrieve their foreign policy from the Secretary of Defense, who has become an obstacle to the realization of goals that the United States and Israel properly share.

Atari's New Circuit

Last month Atari, Inc., decided to transfer 1,700 assembly jobs "from California to Asia," as *The New York Times* put it. Some analysts faulted Atari for having waited too long before making the move; Intel and National Semiconductor had seized upon the circuit-making sweat shops around the South China Sea long ago. Other analysts have been shaken by the sudden realization that high technology may not heal the American job market after all. Those who cast hi-tech companies in an eschatological role in the American economy have been spurred by Atari to speculate that hi-tech companies may behave like lo-tech companies in the matter of profits. It may be that the new economic wisdom is right, that the vitality of American industry lies with Atari and not with U.S. Steel. Atari's move, however, raises questions about something more than the direction of American industry. The real issue is the place of business in the public life.

Atari is taking its many jobs to Asia at a time when there are twelve million people unemployed in America. Naturally Atari is not responsible for the symbolic significance that has been attached to the company in recent years; but the fact remains that it is repairing to remote regions of the world when our own region is rattled out low. Its move, in other words, has a symbolic significance, too. It has the aspect of abandoning a sinking ship. And it looks no better from across the ocean. Workers here will be replaced by coolies there. The attraction of Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan, and the Philippines is poverty; factory hands earn as little as 50 cents an hour. New industries, then, repeat the history of old industries. They establish themselves with exploitation. It is like making microchips in Manchester.

The first duty of a business is to survive and to prosper. But is it too much to ask that there be a moral dimension to corporate decisions? Is there no common economic

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interest in the United States that should enter the calculations of its large companies? Some of the blame must go to the Reagan Administration, which has created a philosophical and psychological atmosphere in which cupidity is a civic virtue. The loss of these jobs is another consequence of our government's Hobbesian economic ideal. It would be a little innocent to expect a communitarian spirit from our major corporations, but there is a crisis in this country, and it will not be solved except by some form of concerted effort. Compassion deserves a place near competition among the purposes of economic action.

I.N.F. Ironies

Ronald Reagan appears to be leaning in the direction of the proposal for intermediate range nuclear forces in Europe that he fired Eugene Rostow and scolded Paul Nitze for considering. Better late than never. It calls for the deployment of a smaller number of theater nuclear missiles in Europe, which the Soviet Union would reduce its deployments to match, and a Soviet agreement in principle that the zero option, which would banish all such missiles from this theater, is still the best of all possible worlds. Mr. Reagan appears to have assessed the German election accurately; it was a vote against a sweet reading of the Russians, not for the whole pride of Pershings.

What has not been noted about the I.N.F. debate are its magnificent ironies. In this neck of the nuclear woods nothing is morally as it seems. The left sees Ronald Reagan as its mortal enemy. Ronald Reagan is for no missiles in Europe. The left, therefore, must be for some missiles in Europe. The European peace movement, however, is for no missiles in Europe. The left, then, must be against the peace movement. Or, to put it more simply: if you are for progress in arms control talks, you are for the installation of nuclear weapons, and if you are against progress in arms control talks, you are against the installation of nuclear weapons. Pious people, beware.

There is a way out of this moral maze. It is the reality principle. The zero option requires cooperation of the Russians if it is to be realized. The Russians, however, will not hear of it. Zero, in other words, equals 572, which is the number of missiles destined for deployment. The Pentagon yields to nobody in its zeal for zero, because the Pentagon (Richard Perle, to be precise) wants 572. Paul Nitze—this is not the least of the I.N.F. ironies—is thus pitted against the Pentagon. He has understood that numbers don't matter as long as they are equal. One of the most powerful critics of the traditional doctrine of deterrence now honors it in Geneva. The President would be wise to take Mr. Nitze's advice. It is the kind of advice that has been absent from the national security policy of this Administration for too long.

Notebook

☐ THE WRITING OF HISTORY throws light on the present as well as the past. New ideas are read back into old events. A Canadian scientist, for example, has just proposed a novel interpretation of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. What Gibbon missed, according to Dr. Jerome O. Nriagu, was lead poisoning. It appears that the extravagent Romans—Caligula and Nero included—flavored their wines with a grape syrup that was brewed in lead pots, and "one teaspoon of such syrup would have been more than enough to cause chronic lead poisoning". This "provides strong support for the hypothesis that lead poisoning contributed to the decline of the Roman Empire." Never mind politics, economics, society, religion, and the Goths. Dr. Nriagu's revisionism consists not only in a medical history of the ancient world, but in a kind of consumer movement's reading of the classics. It opens a whole new avenue of historical research. Was it caffeine that did in the Incas? Did nicotine make the difference at the Battle of Bull Run?

☐ DART: to the *Columbia Journalism Review* for awarding a *Dart*, *CJR*'s emblem of disapproval, to *Parade* magazine for failing to picture Ronald Reagan on its January 9 cover illustrating a story on "The World's Worst Leaders." *CJR* complained that Reagan was rated twelfth worst by a panel of "international experts" interviewed by columnist Jack Anderson, but *Parade*'s cover showed the pictures of the first eleven, then skipped to Combodia's Pol Pot, who was number 13. Mr. Reagan's policy errors, large though they are, simply do not compare with the systematic murder of three million innocent people. Instead of complaining that *Parade* lacked the courage of its dumb convictions, *CJR* should have complained about the convictions. *Dart* to *Parade* for printing such a poll, *Dart* to Jack Anderson for conducting it, and *Dart* to those who voted in it.

☐ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "Let us consider one by one, in relation to this country, the conditions which Trotsky regards as indispensable to a proletarian revolution. The first condition is undoubtedly fulfilled. 'The ruling classes, as a result of their practically manifested incapacity to get the country out of its blind alley, lose faith in themselves; the old parties fall to pieces; a bitter struggle of groups and cliques prevails; hopes are placed in miracles or miracle workers'—these words of Trotsky's might be written yesterday or tomorrow by a Washington correspondent. But the other conditions are far from being realized. A strong proletariat united in its hostility to the existing order?—Our proletariat is divided, white against black, native against foreign-born, skilled against unskilled, and is disheartened by its past defeats. An organization by which the proletariat can seize power?—There is none, and the ruling class, forewarned by its experience in Russia, will suppress any soviet that springs into exist-

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ence. Indeed, the lessons of the Russian revolution have been conned more carefully by the capitalists than by most of the workers. A party acting as the brain of the revolutionary proletariat?—In this country there is only one party, the Communist, which attempts to be revolutionary or to act solely for the workers, and the workers have not yet accepted it as their own. Under these circumstances it is idle to talk about insurrections, conspiracies or the seizure of power." Review of Leon Trotsky's *The History of the Russian Revolution*, by Malcolm Cowley, April 12, 1933.)

An antiprotection rebuttal.

KEEP TRADE FREE

Free trade is not a religion—it has no spiritual value—and Bob Kuttner is right to insist, as he did in TNR two weeks ago, that if it is no longer good for America in practical terms, it is not a sensible policy for liberals anymore. He and I would also agree that a liberal trade policy ought to be good for working people in particular (including people who would like to be working but aren't). The question is whether free trade is just a relic from two happier eras—the period of liberal clarity two centuries ago when Adam Smith and David Ricardo devised the theories of free enterprise and free trade, and the period of American hegemony after World War II when we could dominate world markets—or whether it is still a key to prosperity.

Kuttner argues that Ricardo's theory of "comparative advantage"—that all nations are better off if each produces and exports what it can make most efficiently—no longer applies. Local factors such as climate and natural resources don't matter much anymore. As a result, "most basic products . . . can be manufactured almost anywhere" with equal efficiency. This means, Kuttner says, that the only ways one nation (e.g., Japan) gains comparative advantage over another (e.g., us) these days are through low wages or "government action." Either of these, he says, makes nonsense of Ricardo's theory. In addition, Kuttner says, Ricardo didn't account for the problem of "idle capacity"—expensive factories sitting unused.

"Idle capacity" is an argument against any competition at all, not just from abroad, and has a long history of being carted out whenever established companies (the airlines, for example) want the government to prevent newcomers from horning in on their turf. If you believe in capitalism at all, you have to believe that the temporary waste of capital that can result from the turmoil of competition is more than outweighed by the efficiency of competition in keeping all the competitors on their toes. A capitalist who builds a plant knowing (or even not knowing) that it is less efficient than a rival abroad deserves whatever he gets. As for older plants that are already built—that capital is sunk. If the cost of running those plants is higher than the cost of buying the same output from abroad, keeping them running is more wasteful than letting them sit idle.

THIS BRINGS US to the real problem; not sunk capital but sunk lives. The middle-class living standard achieved by much of the United States working class is one of the glories of American civilization. Yet Kuttner says, "semi-skilled labor overseas is producing advanced products for the U.S. market at less than a dollar an hour. Who really thinks that we should lower American wages to that level in order to compete?"

We shouldn't, of course. But importing the products of cheap foreign labor cannot lower American living standards as a whole, and trade barriers cannot raise living standards. This is not a matter of morality: it is a matter of mathematics. If widgets can be imported from Asia for a price reflecting labor costs of $1 an hour, then an hour spent making widgets adds a dollar of value to the economy. This is true no matter what American widget makers are being paid. If foreign widgets are excluded in order to protect the jobs of American widget makers getting $10 an hour, $1 of that $10 reflects their contribution to the economy and $9 is coming out of the pockets of other workers who have to pay more for widgets. Nice for widget makers, but perfectly futile from the perspective of net social welfare.

After all, if this economic alchemy really worked, we could shut our borders to all imports, pay one another $1,000 an hour, and we'd all be rich. It doesn't work that way. In fact, as a society we're clearly better off taking advantage of the $1 widgets. The "comparative advantage" of cheap Asian labor is an advantage to *us* too. That's why trade is good.

But what about the poor widget makers? And what about the social cost of unemployment? If former widget makers aren't working at all, they aren't even adding a dollar's worth to the economy. Protectionism is, in effect, a "make work" jobs program—but a ridiculously expensive one, both directly and indirectly. The direct cost, in this example, is $9 an hour. The indirect cost is in reducing the efficiency of the economy by preventing international specialization.

If the disparity between American and foreign wages is really that great, Americans just shouldn't be making widgets. We could pay widget workers at $8 an hour to do nothing, and still be better off. We could put them to work at their current wage doing anything worth more than a dollar an hour. We could spend the equivalent of $9 an hour on retraining. And we owe it to widget workers to try all these things if necessary, because they are the victims of a change that has benefited all the rest of us by bringing us cheaper widgets (and because, as Lester Thurow points out, doing these things will discourage them from blocking the needed change). To protect them while they keep on making widgets, though, is insane.

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These suggestions are, of course, overt tax-and-spend government programs, compared to the covert tax-and-spend program of protectionism. In a period of political reaction, the covert approach is tempting. But hypocrisy is not a sensible long-term strategy for liberals, nor is willfully ignoring the importance of economic productivity.

In many basic industries, American wages are not all that far out of line, as Bob Kuttner seems to acknowledge in the case of autos. Modest wage adjustments can save these jobs and these industries for America. It is uncomfortable for a well-paid journalist to be urging pay cuts for blue-collar workers. On the other hand, steelworkers (when they are working) make more than the median American income. Protectionism to preserve wage levels is just a redistribution of national wealth; it creates no new wealth. Nothing is wrong with redistribution, but in any radical socialist redistribution of wealth, the pay of steelworkers would go down, not up. So it's hard to see why the government should intervene to protect steelworkers' wages at the expense of general national prosperity. This is especially true when millions are unemployed who would happily work for much less, and there is no jobs program for them.

But Bob Kuttner believes that protection can be good for general national prosperity even apart from the wage question, in an age when other nations' "comparative advantage" comes from government policies that include protectionism. It is important to separate different strands in the common protectionist argument that we have to do it because Japan does it. Many politicians of various stripes, and William Safire in a recent column, argue (on an implicit analogy between trade war and real war) that only by threatening or building trade barriers of our own can we persuade the Japanese to dismantle theirs and restore free trade. Kuttner, by contrast, thinks that the idea of free trade is outmoded; that the Japanese are *smart* to restrict imports and we would be smart to do the same as part of an "industrial policy."

BOTH SAFIRE AND KUTTNER assume incorrectly that free trade needs to be mutual. In fact, the theory of free trade is that nations benefit from their own open borders as well as the other guy's. This may be right or wrong, but the mere fact that Japan is protectionist does not settle the question of what our policy should be.

Certainly, it's worth looking at Japan for clues about how to succeed in the world economy, and certainly one key to Japan's success seems to be a government-coordinated industrial policy. (The current vogue for "industrial policy" is assessed by my colleague Robert Kaus in the February *Harper's*—forgive the plug.) But why must such a policy include trade barriers? One reason Japan thwarts imports is a conscious decision to reduce workers' living standards in order to concentrate national resources on industrial investment. I presume this isn't what Kuttner and other liberal trade revisionists have in mind. Kuttner and others include protectionism in their "industrial policy" for two other reasons. First, as a sort of bribe to get unions to go along with sterner measures—possibly necessary, but not a case for protection on its own merits. Second, to give promising industries a captive market in which to incubate and gather strength before taking on the world.

The trouble with this "nurture" argument is that there's no end to it. Kuttner himself says that it's "not unreasonable" to "treat every emerging technology" this way, and also says that "most of American's major industries can be winners" with the right treatment. After you add the few hopeless loser industries where we must allegedly create barriers to save American wages, you've got the whole economy locked up, and whether this will actually encourage efficiency or the opposite is, at the very least, an open question. And if every major country protects every major industry, there will be no world market for any of them to conquer.

KUTTNER'S MODEL for "managed trade" is the Multi-Fiber Arrangement, an international agreement that restricts imports of textiles. This, according to Kuttner, permitted the American textile industry to modernize and become productive, to the point where exports exceeded imports—a less impressive accomplishment if you recall that the M.F.A. *restricts* imports.

Kuttner concedes that, despite the productivity gains, textile prices are higher than they would be without protection from cheap foreign labor. (Indeed, the current situation in the textile industry, as Bob Kuttner describes it, seems to vindicate Luddites, who got their start in textiles: human beings could do the work more efficiently, but machines are doing it anyway.) So what's the point? According to Kuttner, "The benefits include not only jobs, but contributions to G.N.P., to the balance of payments, and the fact that investing in this generation's technology is the ticket of admission to the next." Yet Kuttner does not challenge the "algebraic manipulations" he cites that show how each job saved costs the nation "several hundred thousand dollars" in higher textile prices. The only "contribution to G.N.P." from willful inefficiency like this can be the false contribution of inflation. The balance of payments is a measure of economic health, not a cause of it; restricting imports to reduce that deficit is like sticking the thermometer in ice water to bring down a feverish temperature. As for the suggestion that the *next* generation of technology will bring the *real* payoff—well, they were probably promising the same thing two decades ago when the Multi-Fiber Arrangement began.

Kuttner also worries that "without some limitation on imports," Keynesian fiscal policies won't work. This is like the monetarists who worry that financial advances such as money market funds will weaken the connection between inflation and the money supply. Unable to make their theory accord with life, they want the government to make life accord with their theory. There *is* a world economy—which Bob Kuttner seems to recognize as a good thing—and this means Keynesian techniques will increasingly have to be applied internationally.

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As for the automobile "domestic content" bill, which would require companies selling cars and trucks in the United States to build part of them here, Kuttner says it will preserve competition "because it places no limits on the number of Toyotas and VWs Americans may buy." It simply requires those Toyotas to be made in America, which must be a competitive disadvantage or you wouldn't need a law forcing Toyota to do it.

There can be no pretense that domestic content legislation has anything to do with "industrial policy"—improving the competitive ability of American industry. It is protectionism, pure and unadorned, and each job "saved" will cost other American workers far more than it will bring the lucky beneficiary. Like most protectionist measures, far from aiding America's adjustment to world competition, it just helps put off the day of reckoning.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

The suites of San Francisco.

HOTEL CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

My favorite response to the visit of Queen Elizabeth II was reported by Herb Caen, the chief chronicler of everything rebellious, pretentious, and nut-flavored in the Bay Area. Until the weather intervened, the Queen had been scheduled to sail through the Golden Gate in the Royal Yacht *Britannia*, and would be greeted by an armada of sailboats releasing balloons. Caen, however, alerted his readers to the plans of certain "mad Irishers," who vowed to paint their bottoms green and moon the Queen from a boat.

Green bottoms aside, San Francisco is an intensely political community, where minority and interest groups are tightly organized. Mayor Dianne Feinstein wanted to be seen at the Queen's side, but she could ill afford either to antagonize the portion of the Irish community that is enraged over British conduct in Northern Ireland, or to provoke some form of violence that would ruin the city's efforts to obtain the 1984 Democratic Convention. Her solution was to assure Irish groups that she favored a united Ireland, and to hint that, "if I had the opportunity, I would share my thoughts with the Queen." The Mayor later reminded reporters that her promise to "share thoughts" on Ireland with the Queen had been "in the conditional tense." The moment never came.

The leader of the coalition protesting the visit of the Queen and President Reagan was a former convict named John Maher, a remarkable man who in 1971 started the Delancey Street organization to re-educate ex-convicts, change their attitudes, teach them new skills, and send them out into the world as peaceful citizens. Delancey Street's operations now include six flourishing businesses, operated by the three hundred ex-cons who live in residence and by some of the five hundred alumni who remain in the area. Obviously Maher commands troops to send into politics, and his connections were multiplied in the early '70s, when prominent people were drawn to Delancey Street to play "the game," an aggressive, Synanon-like form of encounter group invented by Maher and his wife, Mimi Silbert. Operating "like a Gaelic clan," as Maher puts it, Delancey Street has formed ties with farm workers, feminists, unions, black groups, and—not least in voter strength—the Harvey Milk and Alice B. Toklas clubs, which enroll most of the city's gay Democrats. Delancey Street even runs special programs to train police, in which most of the state's departments have participated.

John Maher wanted to capture a part of the media coverage to show the world that a broadly based coalition of "ethnics and liberals" supported the I.R.A. and opposed the Queen and Reagan. Like Feinstein, he wants to maximize his influence at the '84 convention, and so he shared her interest in proving that protests in San Francisco need not be dangerous. Accordingly, his first order of business was to round up a squad of Irish dockworkers and carpenters, which he led from saloon to saloon informing known crazies among the patrons that they were not to shoot anybody.

Maher's next step was to place a full-page announcement in the *Chronicle*—which charged him its $19,000 "international rate" as compared to the $10,000 it charged its department store advertiser, Liberty House, for a full page welcoming the Queen. Maher's ad, sponsored by the "Irish Republican Committee," cut a wide swath of coalition politics. The speakers for its main rally were Martin Luther King III; James Herman, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union; John Henning, executive secretary of the A.F.L.-C.I.O.; Dolores Huerta of the United Farm Workers; Aileen Hernandez of NOW; Cecil Williams, the minister of Glide Memorial Church; and Harry Britt, a gay city supervisor. The slogan was, "San Franciscans want a free Ireland, no intervention in El Salvador, a nuclear freeze, jobs and housing, and an end to discrimination."

THE TELEVISION HIGHLIGHT of the week was the Queen's trek up the flooded roads to Ronald Reagan's "ranch" (the word for "farm" west of the Rockies). Her Majesty had to ride in a crude four-wheel-drive vehicle, but she took it like a trouper. The cameras showed the Reagans greeting her on their mountaintop and serving her a Mexican lunch. Ronald Reagan wore a denim jacket and a string tie, and gave his consummate portrayal of a natural-born American aristocrat, risen from the countryside yet no less noble in his way than the royalty to whom he so confidently held out his hand. Nancy Reagan was somewhat stiffer; somehow she retains the image of a climber. There were letters to the editor protesting her

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right to wear purple in the presence of the Queen.

The next day the Queen was here with the Mayor at Symphony Hall, where she was serenaded by a spectrum of talent from children's choruses to Tony Bennett, and introduced to 2,500 local dignitaries to whom City Hall owes favors. During the concert, as Mary Martin was about to do her thing, an Irish-American named Seamus Gibney rose from the audience and advanced toward the Queen's balcony shouting, "Stop the torture!"—a reference to practices alleged to take place at Britain's Lankesch Prison. The London papers reported that the Queen responded "like a Brit with true grit," staring without expression as the audience—joined by the impeccable Prince Philip—began clapping to drown out Seamus Gibney, who was soon escorted from the hall.

THE NEXT DAY the Reagans arrived; they sped down an empty freeway from which all traffic had been removed at the start of the afternoon rush hour. Now there were two royal couples in town. The Presidential rooms at the St. Francis were freshly painted and refurnished by a team of flown-in decorators, sniffed by security dogs, and stuffed with scentless flowers. President Reagan, we learned, cannot abide flowers that smell.

That night the President entertained the Queen at a dinner at the De Young Museum in Golden Gate Park. The 250 guests ate lobster terrine and golden caviar from china that rested on silk tablecloths. Elsewhere in the park, a crown of 7,000 demonstrators gathered at the time specified in Maher's ad. They were solidly sealed off at a good distance from the museum. A sizable remnant of the demonstrators then marched through sporadic rain three miles downtown to City Hall. The whole three-story building was covered by huge posters, a testimony to the bargain between the protest leaders and the city. THE GREAT ONLY APPEAR GREAT BECAUSE YOU ARE ON YOUR KNEES, proclaimed the largest sign. RISE!

In the plaza, wooden tables had been set out in rows and covered with sheets of green plastic. In counterpoint to the feast at the museum, 3,000 senior citizens were fed a meal of hot dogs and potato salad in the drizzling rain. Beyond the tables moved a man and woman covered with giant masks of the President and the Queen. As they were carried in sedan chairs through the plaza, they tossed out scraps of bread and shouted, "Crumbs to the people!"

It is best, perhaps, to pass over what the various speakers told the demonstrators that night. They spoke of many oppressed minorities and worthy causes. If their speeches recalled the '60s, it may have been because they tended to assume that all good causes are inextricably linked, and all evil arrayed in conspiracy against them. Loyalty to the I.R.A. was not a big enough net to hold this crowd of San Francisco rebels together. The voices grew strident, the rains came down, the listeners dwindled. Overhead a plane flew, flashing "Rock and roll / KMEL / God save the Queen."

The next day Ronald Reagan addressed the Commonwealth Club—an organization of business people, bankers, and professionals—in the largest ballroom of the Hilton Hotel. Again the streets around the hotel were lined with demonstrators; the largest group was composed of federal employees, lamenting their diminished benefits. The Reverend Cecil Williams was supposed to have outfitted six hundred indigents in donated tuxedos, but I didn't see them.

INSIDE THE BALLROOM, a file of sixty people parade across the dais and take their places at the head table. Most of them are gray-haired, white males. Mr. and Mrs. Reagan come in beaming to a standing ovation. They look fresh and genuinely happy. The President has an excellent tan. Before long, he delivers a speech extolling free trade. He quotes General Patton. He expresses the same crackpot-religious Darwinism that he had used many times in his years on the campaign trail: that Americans were brought to this land as a special "breed . . . not sons and daughters of second-rate stock," but "born to carry liberty's banner." There may be conflict in the block around the hotel, but there is none in Ronald Reagan's America. "If you work hard, pull yourself up, and succeed, then by golly, you deserve life's prize. . . . Let us encourage achievement and excellence. We want America to be a nation of winners again." There is no worry in Ronald Reagan's speech, or in his twinkling eyes, about what to do for nations or individuals or groups who are nonwinners. All that is replaced with a "by golly" that is written right into the script.

In fact, as I follow that prereleased script, I note that it is getting a delivery that surpasses the performance of any other politician I've seen, in life or on the screen. There is a chuckling resonance to the asides, a humane solemnity to the description of difficulties, a manly firmness to the resolution—and all expressed with the most generous good humor.

I find myself distracted by the mechanics of this magnificent performance. I note that the President is flanked by two squares of plastic, each about two feet on a side, erected on metal stands to the height of his head. I think at first these are bulletproof screens, but I notice that most of his listeners can see the President's face between them. He turns his head as he speaks, first to one side, then to the other, taking in the entire audience in the most natural manner imaginable. Never once does he look down to glance at what he must be reading.

The answer, I learn, is that the plastic screens are transparent only when seen from the audience. The President alone can see his speech projected on the side of either screen facing him. Thus he is able, as he speaks, to turn his head in his own practiced rhythm, giving the illusion of a completely genial spontaneity.

It isn't just the device; it's the man using the device. He handles it with perfect confidence. He's a winner, by golly! When it is time to take written questions from the audience, he handles them with ease, reading genially and firmly as if from transparent shields inscribed inside his mind.

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And so the grand visitation is brought off without a hitch. The President and Queen depart this strange and gorgeous Western city without a glimpse, and conceivably without a thought, of those who object to them or those who suffer from the policies they stand for.

Yet neither have the protesters been defeated, if their goals are correctly understood. Given their numbers, they obtained maximum coverage from the media. They showed City Hall they are a force to be reckoned with. And they proved to a committee of Democrats who flew in the following week that demonstrations in San Francisco can be incorporated into the ongoing political process. It is safe to have a Democratic convention here.

The bad weather continued, and the Queen and the Prince went on to Seattle by plane. But the *Britannia* followed up the coast after them, and it was inevitable that before too many days they would once more embark upon it. And somewhere, out there upon the Pacific Ocean, I would like to think—not from malice, but in appreciation of that which forever defies pomp and pride and appeals to our sense that the affairs of men need not remain as they are—the green bottoms are waiting.

JEREMY LARNER

Jeremy Larner, who wrote the screenplay for *The Candidate*, has just completed a new novel.

Why your bill is about to go up again.

OLD GAS, NEW GAS

AMERICANS who heat their homes with natural gas have suffered a bitter winter. Price hikes across the country—ranging from 20 percent to a staggering 70 percent—have pinched the budgets of the more fortunate and left the less fortunate out in the cold. In Detroit uncollectable bills have reached 25 percent. In Sullivan, Indiana, school administrators warn that increased utility bills could lead to teacher layoffs. In Kansas City, price increases of 37 percent have led local officials to consider drilling for gas on municipal property. And now President Reagan has proposed a bill that threatens to make a bad situation even worse, calling for the complete decontrol of natural gas prices by 1986. Although the Administration assures us that this will result in long-term savings, in fact total deregulation will push gas prices even higher. Studies by the Administration's own Department of Energy suggest that by 1990 price increases from gas decontrol could cost consumers as much as $79 billion.

The economics of the natural gas industry are perverse. Supply is up, demand is down, but prices continue to climb. To make sense of the current mess, it is necessary to look back to the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978. The winter of 1976-1977 had brought severe regional shortages, and the Carter Administration warned that the country's supply of natural gas could be exhausted within the next decade. In Congress a bitter nineteen-month debate led to the N.G.P.A., a complex plan for partial decontrol that satisfied no one.

The Act established a labyrinthine price structure that assigns twenty-three different price categories to a single molecular substance. Broadly speaking, this created three categories of natural gas. "Old" gas (found before January 1977) remained subject to low government ceilings. "New" gas (found after 1977 and above depths of 15,000 feet) was priced higher, depending on the difficulty and expense of extracting it. And "deep" gas (found below 15,000 feet) was decontrolled, and allowed to fetch what the market would bring. Controls on "new" gas are currently scheduled to expire in 1985, while those on old gas are to remain until it is depleted. Whether due to producers releasing gas they had purposely held back, or to actual new discoveries (perhaps some of both), once the price rose, an unsurprising event occurred—lots of gas suddenly appeared. The nation is now flooded with marketable methane.

THEN WHY HAVE prices risen? At the moment, the problem lies neither with the supply of natural gas nor with the cost of extracting it, but instead with the system of distribution. Pipeline companies act as middlemen in the distribution of natural gas, buying the fuel from producers at the wellhead and reselling it to the local distributors, who in turn dispense it to homes and factories. Five years ago, amidst predictions of long-term shortages, pipelines were eager to assure themselves of sufficient supplies, and signed long-range contracts (some as long as thirty years) for "new" gas. Many "new" gas contracts contained provisions known as take-or-pay clauses that obligate pipelines to pay for large amounts of high-priced gas even if they don't use it. Thus even though supply is up and demand is down—factors which should favor purchasers rather than suppliers—pipelines are now caught in a "structural straitjacket," which obligates them to buy expensive "new" gas and leaves cheaper "old" gas unpurchased. Pipeline companies in some places are passing over gas as cheap as 27 to 50 cents per thousand feet for $9 liquified imports from Algeria. *The Kansas City Star* estimates that in fourteen Midwestern states consumers will pay an extra $545 million this year, due to pipelines passing over cheaper gas.

And because transportation costs in the natural gas industry are fixed, one price increase leads to another. It works like this: gas prices are now rising while oil prices decline; in some markets oil is actually less expensive. Many industrial users have the technological capacity to convert easily from one fuel to another, and when oil is cheaper they switch over. But with fewer users splitting the fixed cost of pipeline transportation, prices rise. This

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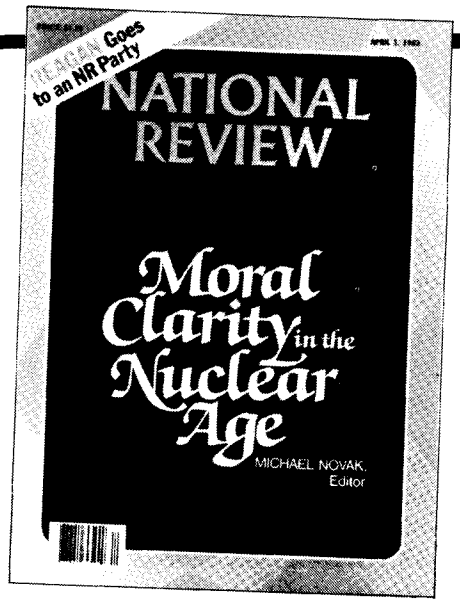
"Without disparaging the importance of those Catholic bishops who have energized the anti-nuclear movement, I would predict that what will prove historically important about what they did is that they engendered Mr. Novak's 'Moral Clarity in the Nuclear Age.' . . . It is a document for the age, and we are proud to publish it in its entirety in *National Review*."

— Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

For the first time ever, *National Review* has devoted an entire issue to a single document:

Moral Clarity in the Nuclear Age

MICHAEL NOVAK, *Editor*



Never before in its 28 years of publishing has *National Review* magazine devoted virtually an entire issue to a single document. But the current April 1 issue does precisely that. The subject is nuclear disarmament, and the document—with powerful eloquence—deals with the question: Should public policy proceed on the understanding that no use of nuclear weapons is morally defensible, not even the threat of their use as a deterrent?

Few would deny that the future of our nation, and perhaps the world itself, may depend on the answer to that question. The mere *posing* of it, says *National Review* Editor Wm. F. Buckley Jr., "is nothing less than an eructation in civilized thought, putting, as it does, the protraction of biological life as the first goal of modern man."

This new doctrine, says Buckley in his introduction to the issue, "comes at us from many sides, in many voices, in varied tempos, with many allurements heavily moral in tone." And, he adds, its advocates,"while they have not called explicitly for unilateral nuclear disarmament, have set forth positions which, if they were put into effect, would almost certainly bring on such disarmament, even as the logic of the wheel is to turn."

In *Moral Clarity in the Nuclear Age*, Michael Novak rigorously analyzes the moral arguments in great detail. Mr. Novak, currently *National Review*'s religion editor, is a Catholic scholar and theologian widely known for his many books (most recently his seminal work, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*) as well as his activism in human rights and other efforts. In editing this document he consulted with scholars, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and agnostic. The result is what Buckley calls "a prodigious effort" in the form of an "Open Letter" to the American Catholic bishops.

The entire text (over 20,000 words) of the open letter is reprinted in the current **National Review**. Because the editors believe that the Novak document is of historic importance, they are making every effort to give it the widest possible distribution. If you are not a regular subscriber, you may get a copy for yourself by using the coupon below right now. While the supply lasts, we will supply copies for just $1 each. But the supply is strictly limited, so do not delay—you will *not* want to miss it.

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leads to subsequent conversions, which in turn leads to further increases. Household consumers, who can't switch, are thus caught on a price staircase spiraling upward.

But the peculiar market structure of the natural gas industry isn't the only reason for escalating prices. Administrative laxity on the part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is also to blame. FERC is charged with reviewing requests for price hikes by pipelines and producers. Consumer groups charge that under the supervision of Texas lawyer Charles M. Butler, an avid proponent of decontrol, the agency has automatically granted companies their wishes. Ann Lower, a natural gas economist with the Consumer Federation of America, conducted a study of possible gas misclassification and estimated that overcharges to consumers may run as high as $500 million a year, an assertion that FERC disputes. Assured of passing along costs, pipelines have less incentive to drive bargains with producers. In fact, sometimes the incentives run in the opposite direction. In cases involving "self-dealing," where producer and pipeline are subsidiaries of the same corporation, a single company can sell itself high-priced gas, and ask consumers to pay the difference with FERC's rubber-stamped blessing. So much for competition.

Faced with a malfunctioning market, the Administration has fingered its usual villian: government regulation. It proposes to decontrol not only "new" gas, as scheduled under the N.G.P.A., but "old" gas as well. The effect on consumers would be disastrous. More than 70 percent of the nation's "old" gas is owned by the twenty largest energy firms, who discovered it accidentally while drilling for oil. It was cheap to find, and it's cheap to produce. But in the event of decontrol, a sudden rise in the price of "old" gas is virtually guaranteed by provisions known as "indefinite escalator clauses," which tie gas prices directly to the price of oil. Selling (profitably) now at about $1.27 per thousand feet, "old" gas provides the energy equivalent of about an $11 barrel of oil. Decontrol will more than double that price, without increasing production costs. The country would suffer the equivalent of another OPEC price squeeze, this one self-imposed.

PRESIDENT REAGAN continues to issue calm assurances that prices won't rise, pointing to the decontrol of oil. The analogy, however, is flawed. The professed rationale behind oil decontrol was the desire to increase incentives for exploration. But decontrolling "old" gas, of course, can do nothing to increase reserves; in fact, by allowing "old" gas to sell as high as "new" gas, the plan may remove incentives for new drilling. Even those who support the Administration's plan, such as the American Gas Association, contest the idea that it will lead to cheaper gas. A.G.A. president George Lawrence told *The Washington Post*, "Since this bill accelerates the decontrol of old gas, we are fearful it is going to create upward price pressure, and have trouble seeing how it is going to result in lower prices." Consumer groups have greeted the proposal with angry howls.

As Congress debates the Administration's plan, we're certain to get an earful from decontrol advocates touting the charms of the "free market." But as long as substantial sectors of the natural gas industry enjoy monopolistic control, the market in natural gas will not be "free"—with or without federal regulation. Anticompetitive contracts, such as those containing take-or-pay provisions, are symptomatic of a deeper lack of competition within the industry. Unlike consumers of tomatoes or T-shirts, who can scan the market in search of a better buy, consumers of natural gas are tied to a single source of supply. Aside from government scrutiny, there are few constraints upon the supplier's desire to raise prices. (One restriction, of course, is the price of alternative fuels, mainly oil, whose "free market" value for the past decade has been determined by OPEC.) Furthermore, concentrated corporate ownership often means that interests supposedly competing and bargaining with one another are subsidiaries of the same corporation. Senator Thomas Eagleton, Democrat of Missouri, summed it up: "The issue is not decontrol, but who controls."

ANGRY CONSUMERS have put considerable pressure on Congress to act, but widespread political divisions promise another bitter debate before any legislation is passed. Representative John Dingell, chairman of the House Energy Committee, has reiterated his position of "decontrol over my dead body," and Senator Howard Metzenbaum has threatened to lead a Senate filibuster. Even in this divisive context, several reforms can be hoped for. Pipelines should be allowed to break take-or-pay provisions for unreasonably high-priced gas. And distributors should be allowed to buy directly from producers. Both of these measures would help ensure that consumers get the cheapest gas available. In fact, the Administration's bill proposes both of these reforms, although their benefits would be more than outweighed by the inflationary effects of decontrolling "old" gas. Furthermore, it wouldn't take an act of Congress for FERC to begin exercising the regulatory power it already has. A number of Congressmen, lead by Richard Gephardt, Democrat of Missouri, have proposed to roll back and freeze prices at 1982 levels and postpone until 1987 the decontrol of "new" gas, now scheduled for 1985. Consumer groups have rallied behind this proposal, which they say will provide them with needed relief.

During the deregulation debate, Congress ought to focus also on low-income energy assistance, which the 1984 Reagan budget proposes to reduce from $2 billion to $1.3 billion. Even at current funding, there's not enough money to reach many who theoretically qualify. In Midwestern cities like Gary, Indiana, and St. Louis, Missouri, as many as five thousand households are without heat. The budget cuts coupled with the deregulation plan promise double injury to those who most need help. It won't be long until another bitter winter arrives.

JASON DEPARLE

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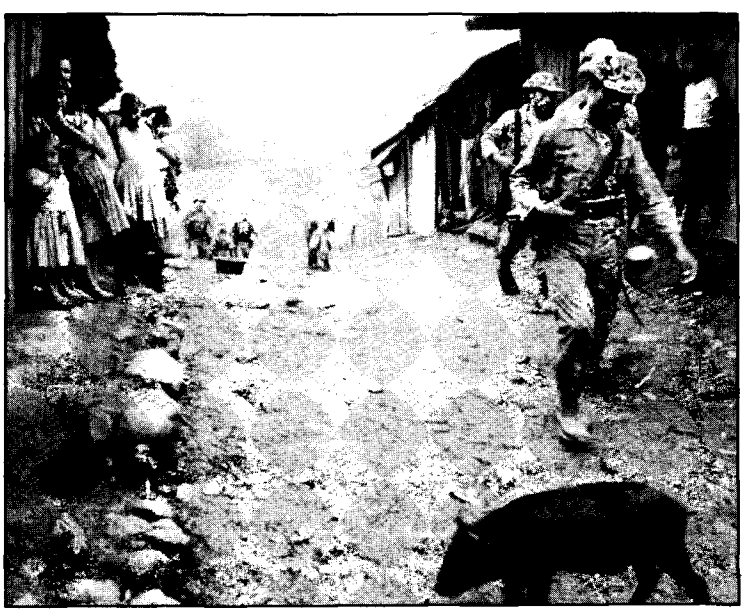
The merciless mission of Ríos Montt's army.

THE GUNS OF GUATEMALA

BY ALLAN NAIRN

ON APRIL 20, 1982, government troops entered the village of Acul in Guatemala's northwest highlands. According to an eyewitness, "They searched the houses and pulled the people out, and took us to the churchyard. The lieutenant walked up and down, pointing at people, saying 'These will go to hell, these will go to heaven. The ones he said would go to hell they took out to be shot. They tied them up and kicked them and gave them karate chops to the throat. One soldier had a big knife and he stuck it into their genitals and hacked them on the neck and on the back. The people were crying and crossing themselves. The soldiers pulled out one boy and put him up against the big tree. They said they were going to shoot him because he was against the government. They took the others to the cemetery with their hands tied behind their backs. They dug a big ditch and lined them up at the edge. We all had to come and watch. The lieutenant said they were going to be shot because 'you haven't educated your children, your children are going around with scum, and that doesn't suit us. But we're not going to throw their bodies on the roadside, we're just going to shoot them.' He said this was the new law of Ríos Montt. They shot each one with a bullet in the face from about a meter away. Parts of their brains spilled out and scattered into the ditch." By the end of the day twenty-four lay dead. The next day the troops killed twenty-two more.



FINCA, LA PERLA, SEPTEMBER 1982.
PHOTOGRAPH BY JEAN-MARIE SIMON/VISIONS.

According to figures compiled by Amnesty International, at least 12,000 unarmed civilians have died by violence in Guatemala since 1978. Last year Amnesty reported that 2,600 had been killed between July and March 23, when General Efraín Ríos Montt seized power in a military coup. By December, however, army massacres had become more sporadic and the pace of guerrilla raids had slackened. These developments were widely interpreted to mean that the government had begun to curb human rights abuses and had succeeded in crushing the guerrillas.

The interpretation was wrong on both counts. The number of massacres fell because the army had completed the first stage of a major operation designed to depopulate the rural villages that are the guerrillas' logistical and political base. The guerrilla's level of activity fell because their village support network had been disrupted. During this operation, I conducted interviews with several dozen soldiers and officers in the field, as well as with refugees and government officials. What they said points to the conclusion that Ríos Montt's strategy was based on organized killing, torture, and bombing of unarmed civilians—a round of carnage that can be expected to resume as soon as guerrilla activity reaches a sufficiently threatening level. And far from crushing the guerrillas, the counterinsurgency drive has left their corps of armed combatants essentially intact, while sowing bitterness among the peasant survivors.

Ríos Montt, who was trained in counterinsurgency at Fort Bragg and served in 1973 as director of studies at the Pentagon's Inter-American Defense College in Washington, D.C., brought the Guatemalan Army back into the mainstream of international counterinsurgency theory. General Romeo Lucas García, whom Ríos Montt toppled in the coup, had attempted to fight the guerrillas with an uncoordinated series of rural massacres. In the urban areas, Lucas undertook a campaign of assassinations that destroyed a powerful popular movement of trade union-

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Allan Nairn, a journalist specializing in Central America, spent four months last year in Guatemala.

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ists, professionals, clergy, students, slum dwellers, and moderate politicians; he recklessly continued these highly visible killings long after their political objective had been accomplished. Besides bringing international condemnation of Guatemala's human rights abuses, Lucas's actions actually increased guerrilla strength.

Ríos Montt curtailed the politically disastrous urban assassinations. He shifted to a program of centralized planning, local and international public relations, and, as an army strategy document put it, "establishment of a scheme for control of the population"—forced labor "civil patrols" used for road repair, surveillance, and army-led military forays. The cutting edge of the strategy was a series of province-by-province sweeps by massed troops to clear the tiny mountain villages and to resettle much of the population in army-controlled towns. The sweeps concentrated the killing in a few brief but fierce bursts. After the phalanx had run out of villages in one region and moved on to the next, it could be said that violence in the first region had diminished and human rights improved. By October this claim could be made for the country as a whole.

AS THE SWEEPS BEGAN, in the provinces of Chimaltenango and Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz, the level of killing—the highest in Guatemalan history—shocked even traditionally reserved elements of the local establishment. "Not even the lives of old people, pregnant women, or innocent children were respected," said Guatemala's Conference of Catholic Bishops in a May 27 pastoral letter. "Never in our history has it come to such grave extremes." In an unprecedented series of editorials in May, the conservative *El Gráfico*, the country's leading newspaper, stated: "Massacres have become the order of the day. . . . How is it possible to behead an 8- or 9-year-old child? . . . We do not deserve aid as long as this keeps occurring."

At the same time, the United States Embassy was assuring visitors that human rights conditions had dramatically improved and that if abuses were occurring they were contrary to policy. By way of proof, they distributed copies of the army's "Code of Conduct Toward the Civil Population," a twelve-point guide to counterinsurgency etiquette that admonishes soldiers not to "flirt or take liberties with the women," and to "show special affection and respect for the aged and children."

On May 24 Ríos Montt set the stage for the sweeps through Quiché and Huehuetenango, the provinces with the heaviest guerrilla activity, by announcing that he would grant amnesty to all guerrillas and collaborators who turned themselves in before July 1. After the amnesty had expired, any resident of a village believed to be collaborating with the guerrillas would be considered fair game. On June 30 Ríos Montt declared on television that "today we are going to begin a merciless struggle," and issued a decree that ordered all men age 18 to 30 to present themselves for military service. The decree stated that the army would "proceed with a vigorous and firm military action to annihilate the subversion that has not understood the good intentions of the goverment."

According to soldiers and officers who participated in the action last July, August, and September, the sweeps were directed not at armed guerrillas but at civilians in villages suspected of guerrilla collaboration. Ríos Montt had outlined the rationale in a May 17 interview. "The problem of the war," he explained, "is not just a question of who is shooting. For each one who is shooting, there are ten working behind him."

According to Lieutenant Romeo Sierra, who commands a 20-man patrol base at La Perla, a northwest highlands plantation, the sweeps were directed from the top. Field commanders like Sierra receive their orders through a chain of command which places only three steps—the minister of defense, the army chief of staff, and a colonel in the provincial capital—between themselves and Ríos Montt. The commanders receive daily orders from the colonel, and maintain hourly radio contact with his headquarters. "I advise him that 'I'm going to Tutzuhil with twenty men.' He knows everything. Everything is controlled." All field actions must be reported in the commanders' daily "diary of operations," which is reviewed and criticized in monthly face-to-face evaluations. "We're on a very short leash," Sierra said.

Sierra, who directed the sweeps through his patrol area of 20 square kilometers and 10,000 people, told me that thousands of civilians were displaced but that "in the time I've been here [two-and-a-half months] no subversives have fallen. Lots of unarmed people, women refugees, but we haven't had actual combat with guerrillas."

EACH PATROL OFFICER, after describing the success of his sweep, would casually point to his local mountain and say that 50 to 75 guerrilla combatants were still at large. Lieutenant Sierra estimated that 70 guerrillas were moving in the mountains immediately surrounding La Perla. "There are lots of them around here," said Miguel Raimundo, a sergeant in Nebaj, a medium-sized army-occupied town south of La Perla. "It's hard to fight them. There are about 300 of them—the ones who fight."

Just outside Nebaj, more than 2,500 peasants had been resettled on an army airstrip. "They didn't want to leave voluntarily," explained Felipe, a corporal who manned the 50-caliber machine gun that dominated the town from the church belfry. "The government put out a call that they would have one month to turn themselves in. So now the army is in charge of going to get all the people from all these villages."

Sergeant Miguel Raimundo, who was guarding a group of 161 suspected guerrilla collaborators (which included 79 children and 42 women), said, "The problem is that almost all the village people are guerrillas." According to camp records, these peasants had been rounded up in army sweeps through the villages of Vijolom, Salquil Grande, Tjolom, Parramos Chiquito, Paob, Vixaj, Quejchip, and Xepium. Sergeant José Ángel, who commands a 40-man platoon based at La Perla, explained the procedure. "Be-

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fore we get to the village, we talk with the soldiers about what they should do and what they shouldn't do. They all discuss it so they have it in their minds. We coordinate it first—we ask, what is our mission?"

According to José Angel, "One patrol enters the village from one point, on another side another patrols enters. We go in before dawn, because everyone is sleeping. If we come in broad daylight they get scared, they see it's the army, and they run because they know the army is coming to get them."

The army has a policy about such behavior. "The people who are doing things outside the law run away," the sergeant said. "But the people who aren't doing anything, they stay." He said he had seen cases where "lots of them ran, most of a village. They ran because they knew the army was coming."

Miguel Raimundo cited three cases where villages fled en masse. "All the villages around here, like Salquil, Palob, or here in Sumal, they have a horn and there's a villager who watches the road. If the soldiers come, he blows the horn. It's a signal. They all go running."

FOR THE SOLDIERS, the killing of fleeing, unarmed civilians has become a matter of routine. I asked Felipe, the Nebaj corporal, how the villagers react when the troops arrive.

"They flee from their homes. They run for the mountain."

"And what do you do?"

"Some we capture alive and others we can't capture alive. When they run and go into the mountains that obligates one to kill them."

"Why?"

"Because they might be guerrillas. If they don't run, the army is not going to kill them. It will protect them."

"Among those you have to kill, what kind of people are they? Are they men or women?"

"At times men, at times women."

"In which villages has this happened?"

"Oh, it's happened in lots of them. In Acul, Salquil, Sumal Chiquito, Sumal Grande."

"In those villages, about how many people did you kill?"

"Not many, a few."

"More than ten? More than twenty? More than a hundred?"

"Oh no, about twenty."

"In each village?"

"Yes, of course. It's not many. More than that were captured alive."

José Angel, the sergeant at La Perla, recalled a similar experience in the village of Chumansan in the province of Quezaltenango. "When we went in, the people scattered," he said. "We had no choice but to shoot at them. We killed some. . . . Oh, about ten, no more. Most of them got away."

According to accounts from soldiers and survivors, the army follows a consistent step-by-step procedure after entering a village. First, Sergeant José Angel explained, "We go into a village and take the people out of their houses and search the houses." Among the items the soldiers look for are suspiciously large stocks of grain or beans. The army takes what it can use and burns the rest. Next, he said, "You ask informers who are the ones that are doing things, things outside the law. And that's when you round up the collaborators. And the collaborators—you question them, interrogate them, get them to speak the truth. Who have they been talking to? Who are the ones who have been coming to the village to speak with them?"

The interrogations are generally conducted in the village square with the entire population looking on. I asked José Angel how he questioned people. He replied, "Beat them to make them tell the truth, hurt them."

"With what methods?"

"This one, like this [he wraps his hands around his neck and makes a choking sound]. More or less hanging them."

"With what?"

"With a lasso. Each soldier has his lasso."

THE DAY BEFORE, in Nebaj, an infantryman who was standing over the bodies of four guerrillas who had been executed a few hours before demonstrated the interrogation technique he had learned in "Cobra," an army counterinsurgency course for field troops. "Tie them like this," he said, "tie the hands behind, run the cord here [around the neck] and press with a boot [on the chest]. Knot it, and make a tourniquet with a stick, and when they're dying you give it another twist and you ask them again, and if they still don't want to answer you do it again until they talk." According to sergeants and infantrymen of Nebaj and La Perla, the tourniquet is the most common interrogation technique. Live burial and mutilation by machete are also used.

The director of an ambulance squad in one of Guatemala's largest provinces said that roughly 80 percent of the bodies recovered by his unit have their hands tied behind their backs and show signs of strangulation. The bodies are usually naked and have been finished off by 5.56 millimeter bullets (the kind used in the army's assault rifles) fired at close range into the chest, or by puncture wounds to the neck, generally consisting of four intersecting slices, characteristic of the army's four-flanged bayonet.

The soldiers said they expect those they question to provide specific information, such as the names of villagers who have talked with or given food to guerrillas. Failure to do so implies guilt, and brings immediate judgment and action. "Almost everyone in the villages is a collaborator," said Sergeant Miguel Raimundo. "They don't say anything. They would rather die than talk."

When I asked Miguel Raimundo about the interrogation method, he replied: "We say, if you tell us where the guerrillas are, the army won't kill you. . . . If they collaborate with the army, we don't do anything."

"And if they don't say anything?"

"Well, then they say, 'if you kill me, kill me—because I don't know anything,' and we know they're guerrillas.

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They prefer to die rather than say where the compañeros are."

According to Sergeant José Angel, it is common for suspected collaborators to be pointed out, questioned, and executed all on the same day. Explaining how he extracted information so quickly, he said, "Well, they don't talk like that voluntarily. You just have to subdue them a little to make them speak the truth."

After the interrogations have been completed, the patrol leader makes a speech to the survivors gathered in the village square.

"We tell the people to change the road they are on, because the road they are on is bad," said José Angel. "If they don't change, there is nothing else to do but kill them."

"So you kill them on the spot?"

"Yes, sure. If they don't want the good, there's nothing more to do but bomb their houses."

José Angel said he had participated in operations of this kind in the provinces of Sololá and Quezaltenango in which more than 500 people were killed. He and other soldiers said that smaller villages are destroyed with Spanish, Israeli, and U.S.-made grenades. Boxes of these grenades could be seen stacked in the Nebaj ammunition dump. The soldiers said they also used a 3.5-inch U.S.-made shoulder-held recoilless rocket that was designed as an antitank weapon but is effective against people and straw huts. At the La Perla headquarters, one such launcher was sitting next to boxes of "explosive projectile" rockets from the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant.

FOR LARGER OPERATIONS, José Angel said, patrols called in army planes and helicopters to bomb the villages. The helicopters are U.S.-manufactured Hueys and Jet Rangers. (Until January 1983, when the State Department rescinded the Carter Administration's 1977 ban, the sale of spare parts for the helicopters had been withheld on human rights grounds.) The bombs include U.S.-made 50-kilogram M1/61As, twelve of which were stacked in the base munitions dump in Nebaj. José Angel said he had seen such bombs dropped from Huey helicopters in Pujujil and the surrounding cantons in Sololá. The ambulance squad leader cited six cases in his province where survivors told of being bombed from planes and from blue and white (the color of the Jet Rangers) helicopters. He said he had observed craters, shattered houses, and trees marked with heavy shrapnel. On December 8, at the graduation ceremonies of the Military Aviation School, the army gave a public demonstration of bombing from Huey helicopters.

The American Embassy would neither confirm nor deny that U.S. helicopters were being used for bombing, but a senior diplomat said that if they were, it would not be a violation of U.S. intent. "If you're engaged in a war, you bomb and you strafe," the official said. "If you have a fort you've got to take out, you save lives. That's what we did in World War I and World War II."

Some Guatemalan officers contend that although helicopters are widely used for bombing, they are of greater tactical importance for surprise entry. "When you go in on foot," said Lieutenant Cesar Bonilla, the officer in charge of the villagers resettled at the Nebaj airstrip, "they see the patrol three kilometers away and know you're coming. But with air transport, you land different units in the area, all the units close in rapidly, and the people can't go running away."

Bonilla said that this type of operation could only be executed by several helicopters at once. "With just one helicopter you scare them away and there's no control." The United States' refusal to sell spare parts had grounded much of the fleet, so Lieutenant Bonilla was encouraged by reports that the Reagan Administration was considering a change in policy. "That would be wonderful," he said. "With six helicopters, for example, the airborne troops would land all at once before they could make a move. The nicest, the ideal, the dream, would be a surprise: suddenly, pow! Helicopters with troops!" As he spoke, he made machine-gun noises and waved his Galil toward the refugee shacks. "Ta, ta, ta, ta, ta! All at once from the air! Pow! No escape routes. That would be ideal."

The day before this conversation, a peasant family in Bonilla's camp, interviewed in their shack outside the view of soldiers, described such an assault on their village. "Two times they came there in helicopters," said one of the men. "They would come in and land and the people would retire and they would always kill a few. They flew over, machine-gunning people from the helicopter." The family said that five were killed in the strafing.

This family, like its neighbors, was moved out of its village and told that the army would provide for its security, food, and housing. This is the "beans" component of General Ríos Montt's heralded "beans and rifles" program. Removed from their houses and fields, the people must depend on the army. Such relocations are a standard counterinsurgency tactic. Ríos Montt, however, has succeeded in portraying them as part of an economic reform program. The relocations make the army the well-publicized partner of international organizations that answer the government's plea to aid the villagers. Many foreign observers, unfamiliar with how and why the army resettled the people, are impressed by the sight of an army feeding and housing a peasantry it has been accused of massacring.

BY SEPTEMBER the sweep was coming to an end, and the next stage of the operation was beginning. "Up here there aren't any villages anymore," said José Angel, speaking of the patrol areas around La Perla. "There used to be, but then the soldiers came. We knew that such and such a village was involved, so we went to get them. We captured some and the rest of the people from the village ran away. They're hiding in the mountains. Now we're going to the mountains to look for them."

Going into the mountains to track down refugees meant going into guerrilla territory. According to the soldiers and refugees who have come down from the mountains, many

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villagers fleeing the army wander through the hills alone, armed only with machetes and an occasional hunting shotgun. But some make contact with guerrilla patrols that act as their guides, sometimes sending them toward the relative safety of the Mexican border.

In some regions, the army has abandoned armed pursuit in favor of a strategy of waiting until hunger and disease flush out the villagers, who must live off weeds, roots, and quick-growing vegetables while staying constantly on the move. This tactic scored its first major success in mid-October, when several thousand refugees from the San Martín Jilotepeque area in Chimaltenango, many of whom had been in the hills since February following a series of massacres during the Lucas period, came down and surrendered to the army, asking for food. Nobody knows how many refugees are in the mountains. In May, before the Quiché and the Huehuetenango sweeps, the Conference of Catholic Bishops estimated that the number of refugees (not all of whom are living in the mountains) exceeded one million. Guatemala's total population is seven million.

Major Tito Arías, commander of the Nebaj base, said in mid-September that 2,000 people from the area of Sumal Grande had fled to the mountains and would be pursued by foot patrols and helicopters. Sergeant José Angel said his platoon went on such operations frequently. I asked José Angel what his troops did when they find refugees.

"At times we don't find them. We see them but they get away."

"But when you do find them, what do you do?"

"Oh, we kill them."

"Are they a few people or entire villages?"

"No, entire villages. When we entered the villages we killed some and the rest ran away."

UNDER THE ARMY'S POLICY, a peasant found outside the army-controlled towns can be in mortal danger. "We know the poor people from close up and far away," said Sergeant Miguel Raimundo. "If we see someone walking in the mountains, that means he is a subversive. So we try to grab him and ask where he's going; we arrest him. And then we see if he is a guerrilla or not. But those who always walk in the mountains, we know they are guerrillas. Maybe some of them will be children, but we know that they are subversive delinquents. I've been walking in the mountains for a year now, and just in the mountains, one by one, we've captured more than 500 people."

Like his fellow sergeants and lieutenants, Miguel Raimundo is comfortable with the army's assumptions. "A woman told me yesterday that the soldiers kill people, that the soldiers killed her husband. But I told her that if the soldiers killed her husband it was because he was a guerrilla. The soldier knows whom to kill. He doesn't kill the innocent, just the guilty. And she said, 'No, my husband wasn't doing anything.' So I said, 'And how do you know it was nothing? How do you know what he was doing outside?' 'No,' she said, 'because he never went anywhere.' 'Yes,' I said, 'That's because he was a collaborator.' "

It is possible that Ríos Montt's strategy will succeed in isolating and demoralizing the guerrillas. But it is more likely that it will end up strengthening them. For all the relative sophistication of Ríos Montt's approach, it has relied largely on violence directed at the civilian population. And it was such violence, after all, that made the guerrillas a threat in the first place. In 1967 and 1968, the Guatemalan Army, assisted by U.S. advisers, did succeed in defeating the guerrillas of the eastern provinces of Zacapa and Izabal with a campaign that took 5,000 to 10,000 civilian lives. But those insurgents numbered only a few hundred and were poorly organized. By 1978 the guerrillas had reorganized, established political links with the peasantry, and expanded their combat force. When the army began killing peasants whom speculators were evicting from the land, the guerrillas were ready to take advantage of the resulting popular resentment. It was Lucas's counterinsurgency campaign that made the difference. His massacres and assassinations sent the guerrillas waves of new recruits and transformed them from a militarily marginal force into a powerful movement.

SEVERE as Lucas's spasms of violence were, however, they pale in comparison to the death and dislocation sown by Ríos Montt's systematic sweeps. Today there are tens of thousands of Guatemalans roaming the mountainsides and living in the villages and camps who have lost husbands, wives, parents, children, friends, and homes, and who carry with them graphic memories of a brutal encounter with their government. Ríos Montt's destruction of the rural social structure has set back the guerrillas, but has left them alive to organize and fight another day.

On March 23, the anniversary of his coup, Ríos Montt modified the state of siege. Speaking on television in the wake of the Pope's visit, the General, who is an evangelical Protestant, said, "We know and understand that we have sinned, that we have abused power, and we want to reconcile ourselves with the people." Ríos Montt has talked this way before, even while directing the bloodiest of his military campaigns. And it is hard to see how any kind of reconciliation can be achieved without the kind of basic political and economic changes that have been steadfastly resisted ever since a C.I.A.-sponsored coup brought the military to power in 1954. It is equally hard to see how such changes can be made as long as the army and the oligarchs continue to rule.

Neither Efraín Ríos Montt nor the officers and politicians constantly plotting to replace him can expect ultimately to achieve a military victory. They are more likely to find themselves on a downward spiral—having to kill more and more to stave off the consequences of the killing they have done before. Whether the guerrillas succeed in using this situation to fashion a victory of their own is another question. But it appears that given the logic of the Guatemalan struggle, the war is theirs for the losing.

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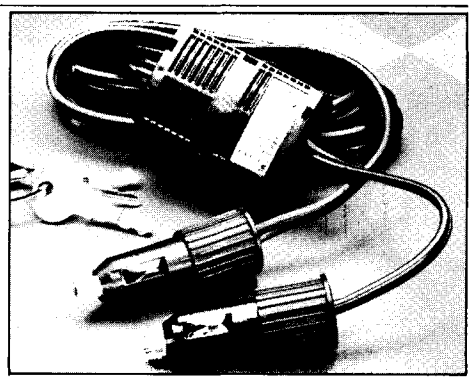
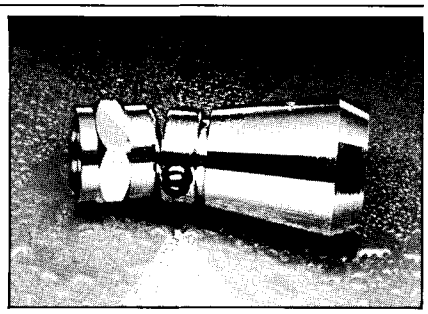
Beyond Jumper Cables

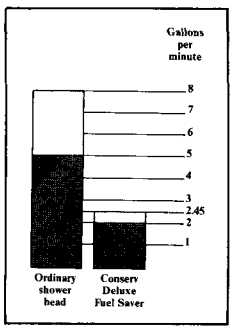


Your car battery is dead. How would you like to recharge the battery and start the car *without ever even opening the hood?* Sound impossible? It's not, thanks to the Easy Charge, which takes the old idea of jumper cables and refines it to a new level of ease, convenience and safety. With traditional jumper cables you have to maneuver a second car fender-to-fender with the disabled car, open both hoods, and attach leads from battery to battery. The Easy Charge simplifies this process brilliantly by substituting connection from cigarette lighter to cigarette lighter. You just plug one end of the Easy Charge into the lighter of a running car, pass the 16′ cord through both car windows and insert the other end in the lighter of the disabled car. A trickle charge immediately starts flowing into the dead battery. After a few minutes' wait the battery is recharged sufficiently to restart the car. The Easy Charge is small enough to fit in the glove compartment. **$20.00** ($2.95) #A629.

Savings In The Shower



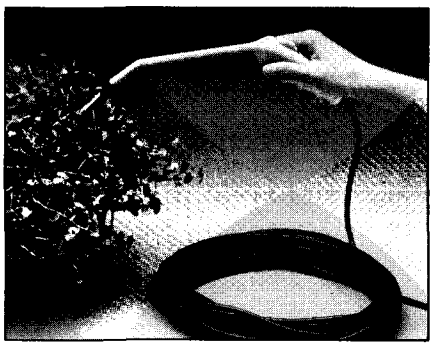
This finely crafted shower head called the Deluxe Fuel Saver and manufactured by Con-Serv, cuts the use of water — hot water — in the shower from 5 or 8 to 2.45 gallons per minute. With the conventional shower head, the average family of four uses 300 to 400 gallons of water — much of it heated — everyday. According to U.S. Department of Energy figures, with the Deluxe Fuel Saver that same family uses 70% less water in the shower and realizes a savings of between $150 and $350 depending on the utility rates. Although the amount of water is significantly reduced, it is aerated and accelerated — utilizing the Venturi principle — for an invigorating shower. The Deluxe Fuel Saver also offers a "trickle valve" that allows you to stop water flow while soaping up. Made of chrome-plated solid brass, the Deluxe Fuel Saver is accompanied by a one-year limited warranty. It installs easily over the standard ½″ shower arm with pliers or a wrench — no plumber is needed. We offer the Con-Serv Deluxe Fuel Saver for **$16.00** ($2.95) #A351.



Dust Magnet

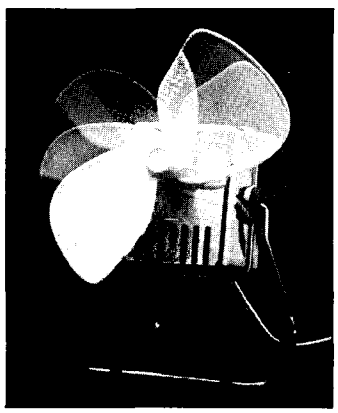
If we ever compile a book on *The Old Ways That Were Better Ways,* we will certainly include a chapter on the lambswool duster. On its own it actually attracts and holds dust like a magnet. The static charge in the lambswool causes dust literally to leap off surfaces where it has accumulated, making this just the thing for dusting bric-a-brac, china, crystal, pictures and other fragile items. When soiled, just wash it in warm soapy water. We are happy to offer a 20″ long authentic lambswool duster for **$8.00** ($1.95) #A163.

Watering Whiz



Do your houseplants run you ragged, back and forth, trip after trip, watering can in hand? There *is* an easier way: with an indoor garden hose you can water them all in a single trip. Think of the steps waiting to be saved! This 50′ vinyl hose comes complete with a set of four adaptors that readily attach to most indoor and outdoor faucets. From there you just take the water where you want it, an easy-control handle allows you to turn a splashless stream of water on and off as needed. This indoor hose comes with a snap-in misting attachment, so after you water the roots you can spray the foliage and wash away the dust accumulation that impairs a plant's health as well as its beauty. The indoor garden hose kit costs just **$11.00** ($1.95) #A681.

A Mighty Little Fan



The most important qualities of a household fan are safety, quietness, portability and force enough to get the air circulating. We've found a little power-house of a fan that meets all these criteria admirably. This two-speed fan is completely safe — if the spin of the soft plastic blades is interrupted, the fan simply stops. It moves an impressive volume of air and its operation is nearly noiseless. Good air circulation is essential year round, especially if you're watching your energy dollars. In the winter this fan will help keep warm air off the ceiling; in the summer it will draw cool air off the floor where it will make you more comfortable. We have friends who keep one in the kitchen to help dissipate unpleasant cooking odors. Because of its small compact size it can be used practically anywhere: countertop, desk, windowsill or bathroom. With a chrome-plated motor housing and contrasting white blades, the little fans look as good as they work. We can supply them for **$26.00** ($2.95) #A516. We can send you the same fan with a durable white plastic motor housing instead of chrome-plating for **$25.00** ($2.95) #A523.

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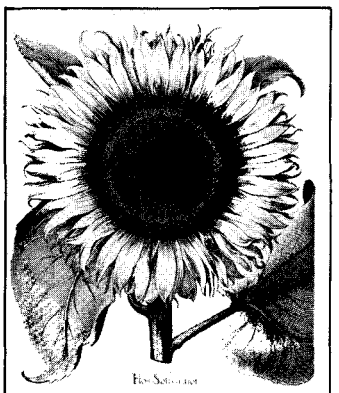
Shirtpocket Stereo

The electronics of everyday life continue to shrink at a rate to surprise even Alice in Wonderland. The latest bit of evidence is an FM tuner the size of a credit card, so small it slips right into a shirt or vest pocket. It weighs all of 3 oz., earphones included, and is ½" thick. It performs like a tuner many times its size and will fill your head with clean-cut full-bodied sound. The specs tell the story: Frequency response from 330-15000 Hz. Under 1% total harmonic distortion. 30 milliwatts per channel. Sensitivity 15db. Full band width frequency range 88-108 MHz. State-of-the-art circuitry with samarium-cobalt magnet. Padded microearphones with 46" cord fit comfortably inside the ear. On/Off switch. Volume control. LED stereo indicator. The radio is powered by 2 AAA batteries (not included). We were introduced to this remarkable shirtpocket FM stereo by MicroFidelity, who routinely work the leading edge of consumer electronics — where absolutely everything seems to be going micro in size. It comes in a simulated leather drawstring pouch for only **$27.00** ($2.95) #A755. This shirtpocket FM stereo will hook up directly to the mini speakers shown below — together they'll give you a complete component system that delivers both public and private sound.

Mini Size-Maxi Sound

Personal walk-around stereos have changed the listening habits of over five million Americans in the past few years. Now Microfidelity has taken the same concept of micro-technology that produced the personal stereo cassette and FM stereo players and applied it to the new MI-FI MFS-6300 micro loudspeakers. They plug into any 120V AC receptacle and turn your walkaround into a total miniature component system that delivers exceptional sound anywhere without headphones! Each speaker has a built-in 3½ watt microchip amplifier. This extra boost in power combined with the "state-of-the-art" polymer-impregnated long fiber diaphragms produces a staggering amount of true amplified stereo sound from a remarkably small source. The speakers, just a little larger than a tennis ball, have a frequency response of 200-20,000Hz. They plug into any personal stereo cassette or FM stereo player and are provided with an integral protection circuit as well as an additional non-amplified input so you can use them with your home system. Maximum power handling is 20 watts per channel through the non-amplified section. **$69.00** ($5.95) #A555.

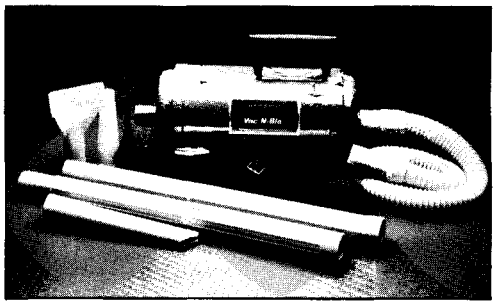
Hortus Eystettensis



Hortus Eystettensis, Eichstatt, 1613

The sunflower represents the beauty and bounty of nature. Its shape and color nearly mirror its maker, the sun, and its seed is the manna of health-food lovers. If nature has moods, the sunflower is a happy plant. Art certainly has moods, and if ever a graphic could brighten the wall of a home, it is this sunflower reproduction of a 17th century artist from the Rare Book Collection of the New York Botanical Garden, our nation's foremost horticultural institution. This impecably printed color reproduction in vivid shades of green, yellow, and brown measures 24" x 36" and can be purchased unframed for **$9.00** ($1.95) #A575.

All Purpose Vac-N-Blo



All vacuum cleaners are portable in the sense that they can be maneuvered quite easily from room to room. But when it comes to stairs, cars, garages and outdoor uses the conventional vacuum cleaner loses much of its portability. Here is a different breed of indoor/outdoor vacuum. The Metro Vac-n-Blo slips right over your shoulder, weighs less than 10 pounds and will go practically anywhere. Attach to one end and you have a vacuum with suction stronger than some full size canister machines. Attach to the other end and you a 200 mph blower for cleaning walks and gutters and other outdoor jobs (there's even an adapter for blowing up inflatables). The Vac-n-Blo unit is made of steel with a permanent cloth bag and comes with a 3' flexible hose, 2 20" extension wands and 4 interchangeable nozzles. You will need to supply an extension cord. This UL listed Vac-n-Blo costs **$79.00** ($7.95) #A764. For convenient indoor use, there is a conversion kit with a 3-wheel roll-around dolly, 3' flexible extension hose, dusting brush and swivel carpet/floor tool. **$23.00** ($2.95) #A765.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

The Quality of Mercies

Horton Foote's first play, produced in 1941, was *Texas Town*. His new screenplay, *Tender Mercies*, is about Texas towns, the people in them and around them. (A lot of the picture was shot in the country between Dallas and Waco.) Much of Foote's writing has been concerned with Texas subjects. He has had fluctuating success in the theater, film, and television, but his new screenplay is a beauty.

Tender Mercies
(Universal Pictures)

A few of the elements in *Tender Mercies* are just good enough to be true; most of it is quietly fated. Its central character is a man who has been through rough weather and has been seasoned by it. Luck and talent brought him success—in country music—then success brought him weakness and failure. "I don't trust happiness," he says at the end, but he is grateful for the happiness he ultimately finds.

Because screenwriting is a collaborative art even more vulnerable to the collaborators than playwriting, Foote would probably be the first to say that the splendid realization of this film is inseparable from a high opinion of his script. Begin with the leading actor, Robert Duvall. (He has been in at least two previous Foote screenplays, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Chase*.) Anyone who has seen one Duvall film knows that he is a striking actor. Anyone who has seen three Duvall films—say, *The Eagle has Landed* (Duvall as a German officer in World War II), *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* (Duvall as Sherlock Holmes's Dr. Watson), and *True Confessions* (Duvall as a tough L.A. detective)—knows that he goes past mimetic wizardry to an almost metaphysical territory of multiple personae. Anyone who has also had the luck to see him on stage—say, in *A View from the Bridge* and *American Buffalo*—knows that the force of Duvall's ambition is all that keeps him from (without hyperbole), greatness. Nothing stands between Duvall and a fine Macbeth and John Gabriel Borkman and Colenso Ridgeon (in *The Doctor's Dilemma*) and Con Melody (in *A Touch of the Poet*), if he chooses to do them. And on screen, if he can't film any of the above or comparable works, if worthwhile original film scripts are not forthcoming, he could reach for good adaptations of novels. Melville's *The Confidence-Man* and Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and Bellow's *Henderson the Rain King* are only the first three titles that come to mind.

To speculate so widely about Duvall after *Tender Mercies* is a special tribute to him because of the character he plays here. The man is a former country singer who drank himself out of performing and composing fame, out of marriage and fatherhood (a daughter), into an anonymity that he now enjoys. (Note: in the course of the picture Duvall sings a number of songs, and it's really he who sings them. He even wrote a couple of them.) Except for the daughter, he has no regrets about his losses even though he is now penniless and lives as he can. After a drinking bout with another man in an isolated shabby motel, the pal (never seen) deserts him. A young widow, whose husband was killed in Vietnam, runs the motel and lives there with her nine-year-old son. Duvall asks if he can work around the place to pay the bill with which his pal has left him. Reticently but sympathetically, she agrees—and at least some of the story is foretold: but with a pleasant sense of mesh, not staleness. Foote provides neatly crystallized dialogue and well-modeled scenes; and his story has twists that come simply from verity. A reporter tracks Duvall to his snug retreat as the husband (yes, he marries the widow) of the motel owner. When the reporter keeps pestering with questions after Duvall says he wants to be left alone, we do not get the expected movie outburst and sock on the jaw; Duvall just walks out the back door of the house. Much later, when he does get upset about something, he piles into the pickup and barrels off, leaving his worried wife and stepson. We assume that he's going to dive back into booze. He stops in a bar and a liquor store. Eventually he comes home and tells his wife that he bought a bottle but poured it on the ground: that he had spent hours driving up and down past their house, glimpsing his wife and her boy watching TV. (Pronounced "*tee*-vee.") Foote is concerned with what is really happening in this man, not with mechanical climaxes, and Duvall has realized it all perfectly.

The whole picture is wonderfully cast. Tess Harper, a Texan actress, gives the young widow pride and gentleness. When Duvall's presence around the place first causes sexual stirrings in her, she conveys it subtly: her increase in dignity is her declaration of interest. Her boy, Allan Hubbard, reflects her upbringing and example. Ellen Barkin, who was in *Diner*, plays Duvall's eighteen-year-old daughter who visits him against her mother's wishes. In two scenes Barkin creates a troubled life. Wilford Brimley, as the manager who used to manage Duvall, has patience that covers gnarled stubbornness. Betty Buckley, as Duvall's ex-wife, still a country music star, gives a more conventional performance than the others,

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Betrayal. Exquisite acting and directing give Harold Pinter's well-written but minor play more depth than it had on stage.

Parsifal. H. J. Syberberg has used Wagner's (complete) score as stimulus for his teeming symbolic imagination and historical fantasies.

Local Hero. An American oil executive in a Scottish fishing village runs into romance, more in the generic than the amorous sense. Very pleasant.

Tootsie. An actor impersonates an actress, plays a female role, and is a better man for it. Dustin Hoffman scintillates.

SK

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but it's the most conventional role.

All the acting certifies the understanding of the director, Bruce Beresford, the Australian who made *Breaker Morant*. First and least, *Tender Mercies* is the best of the American debuts made in the past year by Australian directors. (Others were Fred Schepisi with *Barbarosa*—also set in Texas—and Peter Weir who made *The Year of Living Dangerously* under American auspices.) Did Foote help Beresford with the casting of small parts? The youngish choir conductor in the town church, a plump man whose jowls wag fervently, seems a youthful memory revivified. Still, Beresford has directed as crisply and confidently as he did at home, with as keen a sense of phrase and silence.

Certainly he was helped by the cinematographer Russell Boyd, also an Australian, who looks for essence in landscape rather than for lushness. With Boyd, Beresford fixes the spirit of the place. As many have noted, the Australian outback and this Texas terrain have similarities; perhaps those similarities sharpened Beresford's perception that, in huge flat landscape, visual experience tends to be two-dimensional. Cars and trucks shear across the screen like scissors through paper. The lonely motel, seen in long shot, is like a cardboard cutout. Beresford and Boyd carry this linear spareness indoors: many shots are framed in doorways, sometimes in doorways seen one behind another. The vertical and horizontal lines of nature and of buildings frame the flow of characters' feelings.

And what editing! Beresford's touch, strengthened by his editor, William Anderson, is masterly. One instance: the film opens with the sounds of a drunken brawl that is then seen in lamplit silhouette behind the drawn shade of a seedy motel room. The boy, in his bathrobe, comes out of the motel office behind which he lives, and his mother comes out to join him. Both watch and listen apprehensively. In between shots of the window and the watching pair there is one quick close-up of Duvall's head hitting the carpeted floor of the motel room. Why, I wondered, had Beresford and Anderson shoved one interior flash into this exterior sequence? The answer came quickly. We go back to Duvall's sleeping head on the floor as the credits roll, after which the picture continues with *him*. That opening sequence established place and atmosphere, showed the mother and son in their vulnerable loneliness, but it also flicked in a bit of the future by showing us the protagonist. That one quick insert is the filament that leads out of the (essential) mother-son view into the rest of the film: it connects the "prologue" with the work.

Beresford also shows delicacy in what must be called his staging. In one sequence, five young musicians drive up in a van, ostensibly to get gas at the motel pump but really to meet Duvall whom they revere through his old records. Duvall, informed by his wife that they are waiting, comes out carefully. He and the five keep their distance, but the space between them is filled with their admiration and his reluctant pleasure. Near the end, Duvall is hoeing the small vegetable garden behind the motel at sunset. He has "recovered" sufficiently to write some songs, to sing a little, to record a little, but he has no wish to leave this place and this life. And he has just had some terrible personal news, sudden but not surprising. His wife is at the edge of the garden. Beresford keeps the camera back most of the time, a little distance. The film just watches and listens as this man, in this small garden with evening immensity behind it, quietly tells his wife how battered and baffled he feels. He keeps on hoeing, will keep on living and working with this woman and her son whom she loves, a woman who has seen her own considerable share of suffering. If he doesn't trust happiness, it's not because of her. We know that he has been baptized in the town church for her sake. Apparently he has some belief in the religion he has professed, but the tender mercies he has found don't seem to come from the one who giveth and taketh life. Duvall is willing to settle for some crevices, some refuge in the mercies of human beings.

That distancing of the camera through much of this sequence is the tonal signature of the film. Foote and Beresford want distillation, not saturation. Every step in the story that can be inferred is left to inference, like the elision that goes from Duvall's first suggestion of marriage to their married state. Almost all the violence we might expect in a Texas small-town story of saloon dances and drunkenness is kept on the edge, is felt more than seen. The result is quasi-theatrical, almost a modern version of a medieval morality play. The characters are very much richer than pageant figures, but *Tender Mercies* is more allegory than story—a cry for some understanding of mysteries or at least some solace for ignorance. Motels and guitars and booze are only the surface phenomena.

The Dance Theater of Harlem revives 'Les Biches.'

MODERN ROMANCE

BY EVA RESNIKOVA

THE DANCE THEATER of Harlem's "Program 2" in their recent New York City Center season—*Swan Lake* (Act II), *Schéhérazade*, *Les Biches*—provides an unintended lesson in dance history. When *Swan Lake* was created in 1895, what had been a golden age of classicism was already declining into academicism. *Swan Lake*, the last hurrah of this golden age, contained hints of the new direction the ballet was to take: the choreography for the swans was notable for its lyricism, much of it owing to the unconventional port de bras, in which the arms were allowed to bend at elbow and wrist instead of being held rigidly rounded, imparting a gently flowing quality to their movement. This was actually a throwback to the Romantic ballet, whose prototypical work had been *La Sylphide* (1832); in it, the everyday world is invaded by an ethereal, supernatural creature who fascinates a young man on his wedding day, inducing him to abandon his down-to-earth fiancée, to his ultimate doom. It was this period that the young Mikhail Fokine considered as representing the

Eva Resnikova is a writer and editor with a particular interest in dance and music.

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height of beauty and expressiveness in dance, and his *Les Sylphides* of 1909 was intended as a homage to it.

The neo-Romantic *Les Sylphides* was nevertheless a classical ballet, for this *suite de danses* contained nothing below the waist that could not be found in the classroom. Not so his *Schéhérazade*, created for Diaghilev's Paris season the following year. Fokine had even done away with pointe work in the interests of "historical authenticity," a conceit that strikes us now as amusingly naive—as naive, in fact, as the Ballets Russes orientalism that this work has come to represent. (The Harlem dancers, who are ideally suited to its demands, played it straight, but it still elicited titters from the audience.)

Whither ballet? was the question that faced the classically trained choreographer at this juncture in dance history. Fokine's approach, essential as it had been as an antidote to the academic excesses of the last days of the Imperial Ballet, did not bode well for the future of the art: dancers brought up on a steady diet of such "choreographic dramas" (as Fokine called *Schéhérazade*) would soon be incapable of performing his own *Les Sylphides*, much less *Swan Lake*. In 1912 and 1913, Vaslav Nijinsky made three noble attempts at creating an entirely new movement vocabulary, one as rigorous as the ballet but owing nothing to its technique or style, before descending into madness. But even had Nijinsky been able to continue his experiments, it is likely that the result would have been of greater significance to the history of the modern dance (a half-century jump on Merce Cunningham?) than to the classical ballet.

A decade later, Nijinsky's sister, Bronislava, created *Les Biches*. The 24-year-old Francis Poulenc had been asked by Diaghilev to compose "a sort of modern *Les Sylphides*." Did he simply mean a mood piece in the form of a *suite de danses*? Or, more likely, was Diaghilev expressing concern about the direction in which the ballet seemed to be headed—further and further away from dance values? In the event, what he got was an eighteenth-century pastiche with jazz elements, which also did not attempt to dissemble its debt to the Stravinsky of *Mavra*, *Pulcinella*, and *Noces*. ("Better to imitate something good than to write something original and bad," was Stravinsky's sage response.) But Poulenc's borrowings did not suppress the essentially Romantic nature of his composition. As Andrew Porter has pointed out, Poulenc was really "a romantic and sentimental composer who never quite let himself go. (It is not a failing, but the source of that ambiguity which gives his music its piquancy and distinctive tone.) In early years, the check [that Poulenc regularly imposed upon himself in one form or another] was provided by containing impulses within forms and manners of composers less romantic, less sentimental than he was." Nijinska exploited these qualities in *Les Biches*, creating what the composer's biographer has described as a 1920s *fête galante* in the manner of Watteau, in which "one could either see nothing or imagine the worst." Even the title is ambiguous: literally, it means "the does"; figuratively, *biche* is a term of endearment, but it also has the meaning of demimondaine. (The see-no-evil British resolved the ambiguity in the direction of innocuousness by calling it *The House Party*.)

VIRGINIA JOHNSON IN LES BICHES. PHOTOGRAPH BY JACK VARTOOGIAN.

Though this chic theater piece titillated its chic audiences with its suggestiveness—"It seems that *Biches* moves *riches*," Marie Laurencin congratulated the young composer—the real daring lay in Nijinska's return to an academic idiom. She gave these classroom steps an entirely new, contemporary aspect by topping them with unconventional, angular port de bras that serve also as witty social satire. The girls hold their elbows high and allow the wrists to "break" in an elegant yet affected manner, while their shoulders dip and swerve provocatively. The boys who wander in from the beach in their trunks and tank tops inflate their chests and curl their hands to "make a muscle." Even the classical steps are used to delineate character: the pointe work gives the girls the exaggeratedly elongated look of fashion illustrations and their walk the studied, hip-swiveling strut of runway mannequins; while the leaps and spins of the boys, punctuated by artfully arranged group poses pointedly directed at the audience, present them as mindless, narcissistic jocks. Thus Nijinska's innovative port de bras and architectural groupings, as well as the classical vocabulary, are used programmatically rather than purely formally.

The closest that Nijinska came to formalism in *Les Biches* was in her choreography for the character who has become known as "The Girl in Blue" (the characters were never actually named), who floats onto the scene in the Adagietto, a Somnambula seemingly unaware of her surroundings, a Sylphide who exerts what one imagines will be a fatal fascination for one of the men. She enters with tiny, skimming pas de bourrée, the preferred means of locomotion for sprites and other supernatural creatures; and even her port de bras is a variation on the arms-crossed-on-chest, fresh-from-the-grave position so dear to the Romantic ballet—except that this Jazz Age Wili holds one hand to her cheek, the other by her thigh. (Later she enters and does a short dance with the palms of both hands on the fronts of her thighs.) She is the only

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character who is not dressed realistically, her costume consisting of a close-fitting blue velvet jacket with matching shorts, white gloves, and white tights and toe shoes. And her choreography is almost entirely free of naturalistic gestures, such as the soundless giggles that pass through the bodies of the corps girls and cause them to double up. She has only one: the final embrace of the pas de deux in the Andantino, which in its expressive effect is not unlike the corresponding moment in Balanchine's *Agon*. It seems significant, too, that Nijinska, in her *Early Memoirs*, singles out her choreography for The Girl in Blue to make a point about the irrelevance to ballet choreography of what a later age would call "motivation."

Explanations of the disturbing nature of this character's presence in the ballet usually attribute it to her somewhat androgynous appearance. Perhaps, it is suggested, she is really meant to be a boy, and her attraction for the athlete is thus homoerotic. But it is not her gender that is ambiguous; it is, rather, her sexuality. Hers is the sexual ambiguity of the Sylph, the Wili, the Ondine, even the Sleepwalker: creatures who arouse desire in mortal men but cannot be possessed by them, for these females exist on a more elevated plane.

The Blue Girl's otherworldly quality is heightened by its contrast with the all-too-worldly scene into which she wanders, with its bevy of flappers breaking into jazz rhythms, the 1920s equivalent of the wedding guests' highland reels in *La Sylphide*. Presiding over this domain is "The Hostess," Nijinska's own role, the most worldly—in both senses—character of all. Not only is she the sole female in the ballet who does not dance on pointe, but she has real-life props (a cigarette holder and an improbably long strand of pearls) and is dressed virtually in street clothes. When Felia Doubrovska took over the role, she dressed literally in street clothes: instead of having a new costume made, Diaghilev simply told her to choose a gown from the models at Chanel.

The conductor and composer Constant Lambert once claimed that the entire Ballets Russes had been essentially a fin-de-siècle enterprise and that the change in style between its pre- and postwar ballets merely reflected a change in the tastes of its equally fin-de-siècle audience: "The knowing and Firbankian *Les Biches* was only a natural successor to the lavish and Wildian *Schéhérazade*," he wrote. (Ronald Firbank, the highly affected author of precious novelettes, was described by Edward Marsh at a Ballets Russes performance: "a strange figure pirouetting about the corridor and making little faces to itself.") The antimodernist Lambert had a personal ax to grind, but there is still some truth in what he says. Certainly it seems mistaken to claim, as many still do, that *Les Biches* was the first neoclassical ballet. Nijinska herself regarded it as "the *Sylphide* of our age, the romantic ballet of our own time." To see the first truly neoclassical ballet—and complete the history lesson—one must travel a few blocks uptown to the New York State Theater when the New York City Ballet is dancing Balanchine's *Apollo*.

The Dance Theater of Harlem was originally created by Artistic Director Arthur Mitchell to prove that blacks could dance classical ballet. Now, thirteen years later, the issue seems a moot one—not so much because several of its leading dancers have gone on to join major companies as because D.T.H. itself has begun accepting whites.

IN A WAY, seeing Ballets Russes revivals performed by black dancers may be the closest contemporary equivalent—in theory, at least—to the exoticism that the Russians represented for Western European audiences of the time: instead of "*l'âme slave*," or Russian soul, we have, simply, soul. Certainly this was more of a factor in the ecstatic reception given D.T.H. by Parisian audiences last autumn, appropriately on the very stage from which the Ballets Russes had conquered the city almost three-quarters of a century before.

In any case, the girls looked suitably sophisticated in Marie Laurencin's costumes and performed with admirable élan. They managed the academic legwork well enough, but often at the expense of accuracy in reproducing Nijinska's unorthodox arm positions. The boys did not do as well; though, to be absolutely fair, it would take triple Baryshnikovs to pull their roles off perfectly. Even so, some of the male dancers' faults are inexcusable: few were able to turn a properly controlled pirouette, and none could perform an adequate tour en l'air. The blame must be placed on their training, which seems to emphasize a West Point-like thrusting out of the chest that serves only to create unnecessary tension in the upper body and makes it virtually impossible to produce the minute, millisecond-by-millisecond adjustments of weight that allow dancers to perform the unnatural act of spinning on the tips of the toes or in the air. One comes away with the impression that the dancers' natural ease and musicality are being systematically stifled in the interests of some mistaken notion of classical style.

Nowhere is this more sadly evident

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than in their *Swan Lake*. One must commend the obvious attention to details of staging and the precision of the corps de ballet, though they often have the look of dutiful schoolchildren who have been browbeaten into it. But the dancers are simply not up to its technical demands. A ballerina must have the mastery to give her the freedom to transcend technique, which is, after all, where artistry begins; but the D.T.H.'s Swan Queen could not even raise her leg high enough or hold it there long enough in the relevés-développés to allow her the time to phrase. An exception to all these criticisms is the lovely Virginia Johnson as The Girl in Blue, whose double pirouettes on pointe were silken, and who imbued the role with elegance and mystery.

In memoriam: Rebecca West.

A Woman For Our Century

By Victoria Glendinning

DAME REBECCA WEST, the most interesting woman of this century in England, died last week. She had been living in a London flat high up among the treetops of Kensington, surrounded by books and paintings. An old woman—she was born in 1892—her lameness and poor eyesight had caused her some inconvenience in recent years. But her judgments were as trenchant as ever, and her face had the vividness and strength that mark the Wyndham Lewis drawing of her as young woman that hung on her wall. Dame Rebecca spoke vigorously, with theatrical emphasis in a resonant patrician voice: it is no surprise to learn that she once intended to go on the stage. Even her name came from the theater: she borrowed it, originally as a protective nom de plume, from an Ibsen heroine. But her vocation was writing, at which she worked for more than seven decades—a long and varied literary career, which is spanned by *The Young Rebecca West 1911-1917* (Viking) and her last book, *1900* (Viking), published last spring.

She was born Cicily Isabel Fairfield, the daughter of a Scottish mother and an Anglo-Irish father; she and her two elder sisters were brought up in uneasy financial circumstances. Her father gave up an army career and left his family for long periods while working as an entrepreneur and journalist in America, Australia, and Africa before returning to die alone in a boardinghouse in Liverpool—"doing a Tolstoy" as his youngest daughter put it later. She remembered her father as a man of unfulfilled talent and aspiration. Her mother supported the family by playing the piano and copy-typing. The future Rebecca West was educated at George Watson's Ladies' College in Edinburgh, and spent a short time at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. Her career as an actress never got off the ground; but one way or another she was going to have to earn her own living. In *1900* she described how two years before that date, "as an observant child of six" she had been impressed by the real grief of her parents and neighbors on the death of Gladstone. Then in 1901 Queen Victoria, the mother of an empire, died. With these two towering figures gone, "we were going to have to look after ourselves."

Rebecca West did indeed have to look after herself. Hers was no ivory tower of a life. She did not go to a university; her wide knowledge of music, painting, literature, history, and politics—topics always discussed at home when she was a child—was acquired on the wing. By the time she was eighteen, in 1911, she was reviewing books for the feminist weekly *The Freewoman*, and soon after began writing regularly on politics for the Socialist paper *The Clarion*. It is some of these early pieces that have been assembled and excellently introduced by Jane Marcus in *The Young Rebecca*. They have, as Ms. Marcus writes, been buried in fading journals far too long."(She also contributed frequently to TNR when it was founded in 1914. In addition to book reviews and short essays, she wrote a series of five articles in 1916 on the predicament of women, entitled "The World's Worst Failure," the second of which, "The Schoolmistress," is reprinted here, on page 30.)

WHAT ASTONISHES the reader of this early crusading journalism is its continuing relevance. For many feminists of her period, the one burning issue was the vote; she herself wrote fiercely in support of women's suffrage and was a "teenage dogsbody" for the Pankhursts' organization. But she also looked beyond. Feminism was even then for her "a fight to grow in art, in science, in politics, in literature . . . a fight for a place in the sun." She debunked in ways that were then shocking the accepted image of femininity—the "feminine mystique" that had to wait another fifty years before it was properly examined again.

One of her major battles was against the masochism and slave mentality of women themselves. Self-sacrifice was for her a sin: women must stop playing the Muse and become artists and scientists themselves. "Domestic work," she wrote, "is the most elementary form of labour. It is suitable for those with the intelligence of rabbits." Herself the most capable and practical of women, she was never against applying non-rabbit intelligence to cooking the dinner effectively. What she objected to was limiting women to domestic duties while hypocritically attributing to those duties a false but convenient moral value.

Women who stayed with bad husbands were also committing a sin, wrote the young Rebecca; what virtue was there in keeping bad company? "To transfuse oneself with an ugly, sensual soul is a movement towards death and not towards life." This early antithesis between the impulse to death and the impulse to life runs through everything she ever wrote. Pleasure came very high on her list of what life had to offer; an article called "A New Woman's Movement" was subtitled cheerfully "The Need for Riotous Living" and railed against the asceticism to which many women were constrained:

Anti-feminists . . . want women to spe-

Victoria Glendinning is author of *Elizabeth Bowen* (Knopf), and of a book about Vita Sackville-West, to be published later this year by Knopf.

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cialize in virtue. While men are rolling round the world having murderous and otherwise sinful adventures of an enjoyable nature, in commerce, exploration or art, women are to stay at home earning the promotion of the human race to a better world.

Yet she could berate some of those women at home equally forcefully—particularly lazy middle-class women—pointing out "how disgusting the artificial weakness of women, born of loafing about the house with only a flabby mind for company, must be to an ordinary, vigorous man." She was a committed Socialist in her teens and early twenties, and there are articles here on the "ugly trick" of middle-class charity ("a virtue grown by the rich on the graves of the poor"), on working conditions, on equal pay for women. She underlined the double standard as it operated not only in the home but in the workplace: "On the way to business men give women their seats in the tube, and underpay them as soon as they get there."

With her wit and appetite for life, the young Rebecca dispels the image of the feminist as an earnest and generally undesirable object. In her articles and reviews she was nearly always extremely funny at the expense of the sacred cows of conventional wisdom. In her fiction her literary personality is different. Included in *The Young Rebecca* is a short story, "Indissoluble Matrimony," first published in *Blast* in 1914, when its author was twenty-two. It is interesting as a dramatic illustration of something she articulated anew in *1900*—"men and women do not really like each other very much." It is the story of a spontaneous, instinctual, highly sexed, politically active woman, and of the distaste, terror, and loathing that these very qualities evoke in her husband. Here again, the forces of life are pitted against the forces of death.

It was a topic she returned to more lightheartedly in a later novel, *Harriet Hume*, in which the purely feminine and the purely masculine are locked in opposition. Her conclusion there was that neither extreme is of very much use on its own, and that each sex needs to be modified by some of the other's qualities. This is rather like Coleridge's remark that a great mind is androgynous, as quoted by Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own*. Virginia Woolf said artists must be "man-womanly": "Perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create, any more than a mind that is purely feminine. . . ." Like Virginia Woolf, Rebecca West did not in her fiction always achieve the necessary fusion that she so formidably did in her journalism and nonfiction. Some of the problems of women as writers remain.

Rebecca West's literary criticism, which if collected would fill many volumes, was always perceptive, often provocative, sometimes perverse. It was never tentative. An article in *The Young Rebecca* opens: "Writers on the subject of August Strindberg have hitherto omitted to mention that he could not write." Her very first book, published in 1916, was an irreverent study of Henry James. She returned to him in *1900*, coupling him with that other American anglophile, the portraitist John Singer Sargent. Profanely but with point, she compared them to butlers in great houses—discreet, inquisitive, and knowing about the secrets of the aristocracy they serve. This curiosity "is the attitude not only of the butler but of all artists . . . they alone know what is happening." Both James and Sargent, she wrote, even looked liked butlers. She condemned Henry James as "a ghastly man," especially in regard to his snobbery; but her final judgment on him was the one she meant us to carry away. "But we cannot do without him; he diagnosed the world's sickness, though that hardly excuses the too pliant knee of his nature. A great, great genius."

REBECCA WEST BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

She herself had defined genius in 1913 as "the abnormal justifying itself; those who know that they are for whatever reason condemned by the laws of life . . . make themselves one with life by some magnificent act of creation." When she wrote that, she did not know all the hardship that life had in store for her. Her affair with H.G. Wells began in 1913, when she was twenty and he forty-six, and lasted for ten stimulating but difficult years. Their son Anthony West was born in 1914; to bring up a child outside matrimony in those days required courage and stamina beyond the ordinary. The young Rebecca West lived a somewhat restricted life in rented homes with no settled social circle and no security.

When the break finally came, Rebecca

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THE WORLD'S WORST FAILURE

The Schoolmistress

There is only one period in my life on which I look back with the feeling that then I was in prison, that then I was held back, by something more than my own inertness, from the upward movement of life towards self-comprehension; and that was the time when I lived in a world made by women. For fifty years the will of picked women has worked unfettered at the making of the system of secondary education for girls, and it has resulted in one of the most successful of mankind's many attempts to make youth a hateful thing. The intellectual passion of adolescence is perhaps more intense and is certainly more beautiful than first love; but because of these dusty schools where the message of learning is chalked on blackboards by women of no achievements it dies young in most of us and knows no such glad recoveries as come to love. I, who love learning very greatly, fled from school at sixteen, utterly regardless of how precarious the future might be, so long as it did not contain the certainty of a university career. The next thing I found myself doing was digging rhubarb roots in a market-garden on a wet hillside one drizzling November; and I can remember halting at that task, my face stung with the weather and my boots heavy with fat mud, and looking down without regret on the university spires and the towers of my school that pierced the white curdle of mist in the valley between me and the snow-ribbed mountains. I looked on them with the degrading sort of hatred that a pauper might feel for a soup-kitchen where they gave watery soup. The teachers had promised, with the air of superiority which is part of school discipline, to give one all the wealth of the world's mind, and had imposed upon one so rigorously the idea of their aloof and mystic authority that one dared not charge them with manifest failure to carry out their contract. But it is not to be disputed that by a fundamental wrongness of attitude to their womanhood they made education as sentimental, as destructive to the crystal hardness of the mind, as ultimately desolating, as an eternal afternoon spent listening to Tosti or Mendelssohn.

These women had nothing to give. Not only was it necessary that a teacher should attend her school in inconspicuous clothes and give carefully prepared lessons on chosen textbooks, it was also all that the educational system permitted her to do. It was bad form for a teacher to have a conspicuously beautiful and adorned body, to be hotly involved in politics or love, to make art or be interested in any artists but the infinitely dead. It was unfortunate and invalidated the whole claim of education that these definitely excluded activities happen to be the only ways by which the soul can lay itself up in riches. The one teacher who could best afford to be generous was a girl with pale gold hair and a wintry prettiness that suggested that she was sweetly enduring a rule of poverty, who taught mathematics; and all she could give was answering smiles to intelligence, and infinitely pathetic evening parties for the older girls. . . . [W]e would sit by the fire and drink cocoa while she talked with earnest and undiscriminating passion about gods and half-gods, Browning and George Frederick Watts; and, leaning a little forward with her eyes intent on a distant glory, she became much more significant than the words she spoke, like a prisoner in the camp of the enemy whispering the splendors of his fatherland in veiled phrases of his captor's tongue.

A thousand beginnings of imaginative phrases, innumerable arrested gestures of her lovely body, showed that this girl had been born an heiress of the mind, born to spend lavishly its treasures, and I could not guess what had reduced her to so blue and starved a beggary, until later in life I learned precisely what was involved by her statement that she had been at Oxford: Oxford, where women students of history are unable to study military strategy because shortness of wind forbids the official chaperons to go the necessary expeditions over the hills and dales of Oxfordshire; Oxford, where no woman can attend a lecture alone unless she has one of those chaperons sewing red flannel petticoats or knitting a sock at her elbow; Oxford, which breeds women to this conformity, this renouncement of the gift of personal vividness, this resolute practice of dulness as a form of hygiene which no clean person could neglect, which made that golden girl shine no brighter than a dying rushlight, and all the other teachers a mere string of shadows in which any vileness, by simply turning its face from the light, could join undetected. For unquestionably it was joined by women whose society was not less brutalizing to their pupils in school than it would have been in the dark places of the city to which they properly belonged, and perhaps more brutalizing, since their beings fretted to savagery at the unnatural cleanness of their lives. . . .

BUT IT DID NOT matter so much that among these shadows there was evil—for whatever else the company of the evil may do to the young it also makes them deride sin—as that nobility passed on its way without shedding its rare peculiar radiance. I remember the headmistress, a silver-haired lady in costly dresses of quiet but rich ineffectiveness in neutral tints, as unquestionably fine; but it was a fineness *in vacuo*. I cannot recollect her saying anything fine, or doing anything at all, and it would have been violently at variance with her theory of the serene inactivity proper to teachers that any of her pupils should perceive her championing a cause. Yet I am so convinced that she was made of that

This is one of several articles in which Rebecca West "tried to tell how the elegant woman is but the shadow of a man that vanishes into nothingness when the candle of his interest in her is blown out." "The Schoolmistress" appeared in TNR on January 22, 1916.

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steel from which swords are forged that I want to go back to that office where she still sits, busy but immobile, before her desk, doubtless imagining herself high and calm like an aging Minerva, yet in reality stirring up such suspicions of sickness as one might form if one saw a racehorse of beautiful action shut day after day in its box. I want to find out why she so deliberately and with so proud a conviction of her rightness professed an abstinence from action which one would pardon only in the dead, and why she taught us that nothing could be more desirable in life than the stillness and fixity which are the very characters of death. "Why," I would ask her, if I could stand again in the office where I last stood, indicted for the comic crime of writing a poem on "The Death of God" in the cookery class, "why did you tell me nothing of life?

"NO, I have not fallen into bad hands since I left school and joined the cranks. I do not mean that you should have given us what is known as 'sex instruction.' I regard your omission to do so as one of the few claims you have upon my respect, for, so far as I can judge from such stages in the development of myself and my schoolfellows as merged into consciousness and remain in the memory, your intervention in this matter would have put the last touch of ruin to our already shattered relations. It is best that one should learn these things from other human beings at the same stage of development as oneself, so that one is not obliged to believe them, but can push out of one's belief any fact that comes too soon, while registering it for further reference when one is old enough to assimilate it. But every statement that comes from a teacher must be accepted at once as true or the whole sanction of education is gone. Are you then going to teach a little girl the facts of motherhood before she is old enough to appreciate the physical and psychical rewards that lighten that cruel failure of the human structure? Or are you going to lie, as every handbook on sex instruction that I have ever seen has lied, and pretend that motherhood is a pretty and sentimental occasion like the first communion in a cheap French ollograph, and be recognized by your pupils, as soon as they had knowledge and became people whose opinions mattered, as a liar?

"I do not mean to reproach you for your sexual nothingness. Not long ago I met a Frenchwoman who had been much loved, and she was more nearly nothing than even you: a shadow cast on the wall by the bodies of idle men, which vanished when they were called away to the business of life. Because sexual love is the most useful and common type of excitement we are apt to think it necessary to life, when the truth is that it is excitement itself that is life's essential. Saint Teresa knew no more of passion than that first love which sprang green to a sudden withering, as spring things do in her country, on the grey rocks of Avila; yet she was a stronger personality than any woman who ever lived. The most one can say is that had she been admitted to the company of lovers and become an executor of the laws of life she probably would have spent her genius more sensibly than in the multiplication of convents to the economic ruin of Spain. Any intensity of excitement, whether it be evoked by one behind the stars or within one's arms, acts upon the life of the soul like sunlight upon the growth of a plant. Adventurers swept by an irrational passion for the unknown abandon comfort and security and sail up new rivers to new continents. Artists and scientists, too eager about life to settle down to the business of prosperity, find out new truths. Excited lovers cast off the freedom of sterility and make new lives. Without this light struck by men's nerves the world would stand dark in the universe like a great house unlit in the night.

"FROM the essential of life you debarred and even dissuaded us by your blank monotony of voice and appearance, your silence about art and the government of the world, your dreary advocacy of non-inquiry and acquiescence. You cannot excuse yourself by saying that at least you attended to your business of teaching; that, being so dead, you could hardly do. If there is one thing certain about God it is that he thinks in mathematics, for the worlds which are his thoughts are planned by that. But it was hard to perceive the divinity of the subject from the teaching of your dispirited staff, so deliberately rubbed down to dulness.

"My eye roves round the room to discover in its familiarity something that I had overlooked, something that holds the key to this riddle of designed worthlessness. It emerges from my memory with the clearness that disregarded facts sometimes preserve through the years. It is the photogravure of an Italian madonna: her limp hands hold the Holy Child negligently and distastefully, as though she considered that the advantages of being the Mother of God have been much exaggerated, and she lowers to us a blank oval face with a narrow forehead which is the very throne of nothingness. I am shocked into speech. "Of course, that is your ideal! But surely you see that that is not the Virgin chosen by God to mother the Son of Man, but the virgin who is foolishly desired by men? This is not the woman who bore her child in a manger, who lifted him to the adoration of the kings, who saved him by the flight into Egypt. This is the creation of that lust in the hearts of the baser sort of men which is a perverted form of fatherhood. They desire at once to love and give life, and so they imagine fair pieces of flesh that have gained no wealth from the world, who have hardly done more than breathe before their lovers come to them. It is monstrous that men should desire any human being to stand aside even for the period of the youth from man's task of experience, and any human being who consents to stand aside sins against the spirit within him. And that is what you are doing. You are not free women, for all your economic independence; you are still slaves to men's desires. You weary and starve your pupils with your deliberate vacuity, because men like unmarried women to be blank pages on which that may write what they will. You too live on the favor of men. You too are given up body and soul to the instinct for elegance."

REBECCA WEST

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West escaped to the United States where she lectured and formed what was to be a long and happy connection with *The New York Herald-Tribune*. Because of her well-known relationship with Wells, her social position in New York was at that time ambiguous; and she was never allowed to forget this liaison, which always appealed to the imagination of journalists and critics. She later made a happy marriage, to Henry Maxwell Andrews, a banker, but her private life was never easy, and its privacy was often ruthlessly invaded. In *1900* she wrote that "a Public Person runs a risk of having the Private Person within him or her wither away." She was writing about Alice Roosevelt, who never let that happen to her. It did not happen to Rebecca West either.

Her last book, *1900*, is essentially a picture book of people and places, held together by Rebecca West's pithy, idiosyncratic essays on world events at the turn of the century: the intellectual and social climate, art, theater, literature, the state of scientific knowledge and of politics in Europe, Africa, the Far East, and the United States. Her picture of the Englishman's concept of America in 1900 is given through the eyes of her own father, who had traveled widely. He told his daughters of the clean villages and towns of rural America, of

> brooks viscous with fish because no angler came that way . . . of lakes lying high in the mountains whose surfaces shone like a mirror and were as inviolate, since they had never been cut by boat or swimmer since the world began . . ."

—America, still in 1900 the Promised Land.

Rebecca West said—she was talking about Queen Victoria's until recently unknown talent for drawing—that "So much of life is hidden." It was this awareness of hidden things, and her passion for information, that made her such a remarkable analytical journalist and recorder: think only of her reporting of the Nuremberg trials after World War II, and her studies of spies in *The Meaning of Treason*. If she achieved one single "magnificent act of creation" it was *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, the long book she wrote about a journey through Yugoslavia just before World War II, a work that is more than a travel book: it is a compendium of history, politics, archaeology, anecdote, conversation, polemic, prophecy, and jokes.

This temperamental diversity is perhaps what prevented Rebecca West from achieving more popular fame (she is every writer's writer); she is hard to categorize, impossible to pigeonhole. In the past few years, however, her unique quality has been increasingly acknowledged. She was a major stylist, a major critical intelligence, a major commentator on public events and sexual politics, and a radical moralist. Witty, inquisitive, and perverse, she was a maverick, and yet by reason of her life span and experience an ideal model for any study of twentieth-century woman.

THE MARK OF MAO

Son of the Revolution
by Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro

(Knopf, 356 pp., $15)

In the fall of 1980, while I was *The New York Times* correspondent in Peking, I received a phone call from an American woman who was teaching English at an obscure college in Hunan Province. The teacher, Judith Shapiro, wanted to report that students at the college were demonstrating outside the provincial Communist Party headquarters and had gone on a hunger strike to protest official interference in an experimental local election. The authorities had tried to block the election, she said, because one of the candidates had publicly proclaimed he was not a Marxist. For China, it was an extraordinary story, but Miss Shapiro then added a detail that made it even more stunning—the heretical candidate was her husband, Liang Heng, a student at the college.

I dutifully reported the affair in the *Times*, but I often wondered about the background of Mr. Liang and how he and Miss Shapiro had ended up as husband and wife. There is no need to surmise any longer. Mr. Liang, now a graduate student at Columbia University thanks to his wife's American citizenship, has written a compelling, detailed, and devastating account of what it was like to grow up in Mao's China.

The publication of *Son of the Revolution* marks a significant event in our understanding of China. For China's intellectuals, unlike their Russian counterparts, have maintained a literary silence about life under Communism. One can speculate on the causes of this silence. It may owe something to the centuries of Chinese nationalism, that special pride in belonging to the world's oldest and greatest civilization that makes all Chinese reluctant to criticize their country. It may also stem from the Confucian sense of rectitude: the loyal minister does not betray his monarch in public. Or it may be a tribute to how much more control the Chinese Communist regime has achieved over its writers and artists than the Soviet Union has. Whatever the case, the lack of a literature free from official cant has allowed many Westerners to suspend disbelief and imagine the People's Republic to be the kind of revolutionary utopia John Reed saw in the early days of the Soviet Union.

In the past few years, with more Western scholars, journalists, students, and businessmen finally able to live in China, that image has begun to be replaced by a more balanced and realistic portrait. Mr. Liang now pronounces a kind of epitaph on our romance with Mao Zedong.

What makes his account all the more poignant is how he shows that in the early days the Communists really did enjoy enormous popular support. His father, a journalist with the *Hunan Daily*, and his mother, a member of the Public Security Bureau, China's K.G.B., fervently believed in Chairman Mao and wanted nothing more than to be admitted to the Party. When their eldest daughter was born in 1949, the year of the Communists' triumph, they named her Liang Fang, literally "Liang Liberation." For Mr. Liang himself, his first word after father, mother, and grandma was Mao, and his father regularly held him up to a large framed portrait of Mao hung over the doorway of their apartment in Changsha. As a boy,

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Mr. Liang recalled, Mao "presided over our rest and play like a benevolent god, and I believed that apples, grapes, everything had been given to us because he loved us."

BUT IN 1957, when Mr. Liang was only three years old, Mao launched the Hundred Flowers Campaign, encouraging criticism of the Party. His mother was in a quandary: "She really loved the Party and didn't have any criticisms to make." But eventually her Party boss persuaded her that if she was truly loyal to the Party, she would find some criticism. So she suggested that her leader might let his maid sleep on a bed instead of making her sleep on the floor. But within weeks the campaign turned into the Anti-Rightist movement and Mr. Liang's mother was herself branded as a "bad element" for her comments. Without a trial, she was packed off to labor reform for two years in the countryside. Her husband, being a good Party member, assumed the charge was just and sought a divorce to protect himself and his children. But in vain: Mr. Liang's family was permanently stigmatized; other children taunted or beat him in school, and he and his sisters were prohibited from joining the Young Pioneers, the Communist youth organization. "I came to resent my mother for making my life so miserable," Mr. Liang recounted. "I began to believe that she really had done something wrong." So despite feeling lonely, "When I saw her at a distance I didn't even call out to her. I cut her out of my life just as I had been told to do."

Life became an endless series of hardships and shortages, but Mr. Liang writes about them with a disarming lack of self-pity. After the failure of Mao's grandiose attempt to achieve Communism in one step, the Great Leap Forward in 1958, Mr. Liang's family, like other Chinese, found themselves subsisting on little more than grass they pulled up from a park. Many people grew weak, their bodies swelled with dropsy, and his school mates amused themselves by poking each other's cheeks to see how large a hole they could make. His grandmother, who gave away her food to him, finally died.

Come the Cultural Revolution in 1966, his father, whose answer to any problem was to quote from Chairman Mao, suddenly found himself denounced as a reactionary. Posters attacking his father sprouted around their apartment; he was led through the streets in shame and eventually confined in a "study class" run by the People's Liberation Army. All his father could say was "You should always believe the Party and Chairman Mao." But Mr. Liang, still only 12, grew confused. "Everything was backwards, distorted, corrupted, insane." "My revolutionary father was an enemy. My father whose dream it was to join the Party was a Capitalist. How had things been ruined?"

After joining an enthusiastic band of Red Guards and traveling to Peking to glimpse Chairman Mao—a mandatory pilgrimage for young Chinese—Mr. Liang ended up on the streets drinking, fighting, and stealing with other orphans of the revolution: offspring of purged officials, jobless workers, and urban youngsters who couldn't adapt to life in the countryside after being rusticated in another of Mao's experiments. Mr. Liang was becoming cynical like other members of his generation. "My family had sacrificed so much for the revolution, but it had given us nothing in return."

When his father was finally released from his "study class" after more than a year of incarceration, the two of them were ordered off to a village for further "re-education." For good measure, the police confiscated their city residence cards so they couldn't even visit relatives in Changsha without permission. But life in the village offered no respite from Chairman Mao's dictum, "Put politics in command." The local officials, whom Mr. Liang characterizes as arrogant and stupid, dogmatically carried out a Party directive ordering the peasants to kill their chickens and pigs, their only source of cash. For such individual enterprise was a "tail of capitalism." In one of the most moving scenes in the book, the peasant family with whom the Liangs were lodged—so poor they only had one whole pair of pants between them—weep bitterly when some eager official blows up their two pigs with hand grenades to enforce Peking's writ.

Ironically, it was basketball that saved Mr. Liang. When his father was finally allowed to leave the countryside after two years of working as a peasant had ruined his health, Mr. Liang was discovered by a local basketball coach and recruited for a factory team. Although he had never played before, he

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was very tall for a Chinese, 6'1", became an instant success, and was fed all he could eat. But politics still intruded into his personal life. He flunked a test for the provincial team because he had relatives on Taiwan, and the father of a young woman he courted—an army general—rejected him because he was only a factory worker and his own father was an intellectual, not the right stuff to make a good Communist. "What an irony it was, that a man who had killed to establish an 'equal' society had such feudal ideas," Mr. Liang writes after his rebuff.

In the end, he was attracted to Miss Shapiro in part because she, though a capitalist, didn't care about his political status: "For the first time in my life I felt I was being accepted for who I really was." But when officials at their college objected to a marriage between a Chinese and a foreigner, it took permission from Deng Xiaoping himself to proceed with the union.

MR. LIANG'S TALE is so bleak that the reader is tempted to ask whether his experience was an aberration. But to judge from other Chinese I got to know in Peking, the most important point of his book is that his story is only too typical. Of China's one billion people, nearly 700 million have been born since 1949, and many now share Mr. Liang's disillusionment and despair. With a group of old friends, Mr. Liang tried reading Marx and Engels to find out why there was such a "discrepancy between the glorious words of the newspapers and our painful reality." But the more he read, "the more confused I became." That now is Deng's problem, how to restore faith in the Communists' leadership and offer a vision of China that appeals to its populace.

If there is a shortcoming to Mr. Liang's book, it is that he closes his narrative without examining Peking's chance for success. Do Mr. Liang and his American wife, who co-authored the book, want to return to China? Their plans might offer some indication of his sense of China's future, but he doesn't say what they are.

Is China under Mr. Deng any different from China under Mao? Mr. Liang's answer is ambiguous. In the closing passage, Mr. Liang writes that his generation did learn one vital lesson, the danger of blind obedience. But shortly before leaving China, when he was assigned to work as a practice teacher in a local high school, Mr. Liang discovered that the students there were still parroting their political lessons without the slightest skepticism. "These children," he found,

> could easily go the way my sister and I had gone fifteen years earlier. Their political indoctrination was the same as ours had been before the great upheaval; they were certainly not being taught to evaluate things for themselves, and movies and books about China's past were still above all else political documents. There seemed to be no way to ensure that the same tragedy would not be replayed.

FOX BUTTERFIELD

Fox Butterfield, a reporter for *The New York Times*, is author of *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea* (Times Books).

RADICAL DEMOCRAT

Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist
by Nick Salvatore

(University of Illinois Press, 437 pp., $24.95)

"An' is that Debs?" an Irish working woman asked her companion at a Socialist rally in downstate Illinois in 1908. "Oh no," was the reply, "that ain't Debs—When Debs comes out you'll think it's Jesus Christ."

On Christmas Day 1921, a tall, thin 66-year-old man began to walk through the empty yard of the federal penitentiary in Atlanta—free after serving two years and nine months for denouncing World War I and the government's prosecution of its opponents. ("While there is a lower class, I am in it," he said at his sentencing; "while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.") As his emaciated figure became visible from behind the bars of the main building, 2,300 inmates broke into a thunderous cheer. Slowly the old man turned, his gaunt face streaming with tears, and raised his arms in a symbolic embrace. Three days later, in Terre Haute, Indiana, 25,000 people welcomed him home, as men who had vied for the honor pulled him from the depot to his house in the same wagon that had carried him over the same route on his return from prison after the Pullman Strike of 1894.

Such was the affection of those whose lives had been touched by Eugene Victor Debs, organizer of the American Railway Union, a founder of the Socialist Party of America, and five times candidate for President of the United States—the last time from his cell block in Atlanta.

The troubled, complicated man depicted in Nick Salvatore's *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist* was a representative, middle-class product of the late-nineteenth century's small, industrializing cities, but with a difference: he came to believe that the citizenry should transcend, not acquiesce in, the incorporation of America. Debs's parents emigrated from Colmar, Alsace in 1849. His father, grandson of a delegate to the National Assembly and son of a Protestant manufacturer, had been disinherited for marrying one of the firm's Catholic employees, a woman of uncommon inner resources. Gene, their fourth child and first son, was nurtured on Voltaire, Rousseau, and his namesakes, Eugene Sue and Victor Hugo. But he was also formed by Locke, Calvin, and Lincoln as their values imbued school, community, and, through the family's prosperous grocery store, home. Debs never lost his respect for law, order, and property, never advocated violence, never abandoned his faith in individualism. Always his Socialism was more Lassallean than Marxian, more reflective, really, of an attitude toward life than a commitment to a theory. He believed that America had once been, and he hoped that it would again become, "A City on the Hill"; and even after he compelled himself to analyze society in terms of class, he rejected the inevitability of class conflict. Socialism, he fervently insisted, "makes its appeal to the American people as the defender and preserver of the idea of

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liberty and self-government, in which the nation was born."

Unfortunately, this probing psychosocial life is not wholly successful as biography. Based partly on new sources and informed by the "social-labor" history pioneered by Herbert Gutman and David Brody, it destroys the legends in Ray Ginger's superbly evocative *The Bending Cross*. But by making Debs's minor faults loom as large as his surpassing virtues, *Citizen and Socialist* violates the rules of proportion. The work also lacks narrative force and graphic power. The veins of the warm and vibrant man (and occasional carouser), who twice went to prison for his convictions and whose humanity charmed even his jailers, at times course with water; and the strife and turmoil that made American labor relations the most violent in the industrial world, seem far removed from their brutal reality. Nevertheless, historians and social scientists will regard this as an important book, and rightly so.

'CITIZEN AND SOCIALIST'S distinction is its exploration of Debs's social milieu, its analysis of his tortured passage from right-wing craft unionism to left-wing Socialism, and its penetrating insights into the failure of Socialism in America. An attractive, intelligent, and purposeful youth, Debs flouted his parents' wishes by taking a job in the railroad yards at age 14, then attended night school for three of the five years he worked on or around trains. At 25 he was the favored accounting clerk in a large firm, was serving a term in the Indiana State Legislature, and was spending much time at the local lodge of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. By then, too, he had come into the gift of language and was already making his public life "a continuous sermon."

In 1885, Debs's thirtieth year, he married a handsome, well-connected, but aloof and somewhat unsupportive woman, two years his junior. Had he accepted one of the business offers showered upon him then or later, he would have eased into Terre Haute's social and economic elite. But for reasons that confute the status theory that Salvatore reads into even his boyish desire to run a train engine, Debs chose to become, and for a decade remain, secretary-treasurer of the Locomotive Firemen and editor of the brotherhood's national magazine.

Actually, Debs appears to have been cut in the civil religious pattern of the social progressives recently delineated in Robert Crunden's *Ministers of Reform*. He was idealistic enough to want a career of service and vain and ambitious enough to forge a creative role within it. He also had the courage to put life and freedom at risk, despite a fragile strain in his personality.

All his life Debs craved reassurance—from his warmly responsive mother and brother; from his doctrinally superior and insufferably arrogant Socialist comrades, Victor Berger and Morris Hillquit; and from the throngs his impassioned oratory mesmerized. As one who understood him reflected, "you knew he needed you." Reluctant to engage in ideological disputation, he often took to bed with the splitting headaches and undiagnosed ailments that also laid him up for months after his strenuous speaking tours. These temporary withdrawals enabled him to protect his psyche and probably to continue in the movement. But as Salvatore writes in words that downplay the many hard and agonizing decisions Debs *did* make, "this posture" also allowed him to avoid a stand on serious questions of policy while continuing to appear "as the lauded public figure."

FROM EARLY MANHOOD to old age, Debs entertained a holistic vision of society, one that affirmed the older moral values, yet welcomed technological innovation and economic progress. For some years, however, this vision demanded more of labor than of management. Convinced that many workers were "debauched" or worse, Debs repeatedly warned that workingmen could expect their "rights" only after they had "qualified" themselves to receive them. Not until the Terre Haute railroad line passed out of local control in the 1880s did he begin to charge corporations with eroding traditional values. (Salvatore criticizes him for sitting out the great railroad strike of 1877, although he was only 21 at the time and still an accounting clerk.) Businessmen, Debs charged increasingly thereafter, were more interested in "hands" than in "citizens"; businessmen, not the labor or political radicals, were the real revolutionaries.

The opportunism of the craft unions was almost as corrosive. American workers "are not to be silenced by any per diem. [Their] high resolve is to

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— Nikolai Tolstoy, *Inquiry*.

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change unjust laws." It was this broadening commitment to a "reign of justice," honed by Debs's reading of Henry George, Edward Bellamy, and Laurence Gronlund rather than Marx or Engels, that impelled him to resign his leadership of the firemen in 1891, organize the American Railway Union in 1893, and become a full-blown Socialist in 1897.

Even as Debs moved steadily left, his belief in democracy, "in a specific American tradition which stressed the dignity of the individual citizen," held firm. For without that understanding, as Salvatore perceptively notes, the idea of a class struggle in America became a forced theory, "disembodied from and in tension with the deepest currents in the culture and himself." Hence, in part, Debs's aloofness from the Socialist Party's internal conflicts and lack of interest in platform planks and municipal socialism. Fashioned in the tradition of generations of Protestant preachers, he "emphasized the centrality of individual conversion in constructing a collective identity." Neither the workers nor the Socialists were yet capable of governing, he said in 1910. "They would not know what to do with their freedom if they had it." And so, his burning eyes flashing love and his long, thin body pulsating with moral earnestness, he exhorted them:

> I am not a Labor Leader; I do not want you to follow me or anyone else. . . . I would not lead you into the promised land if I could, because if I could lead you in, someone else would lead you out. YOU MUST USE YOUR HEADS AS WELL AS YOUR HANDS, and get yourself out of your present condition.

Long before then, Debs's holistic vision and early faith in "the young, virile" class and industrial union movement of the West had led him into alliance with William D. "Big Bill" Haywood's militant International Workers of the World. But in 1912, discouraged by Haywood's disdain for the electoral process and appalled by his penchant for sabotage, coercion, and violence, he painfully broke with the "Wobblies" leader. Conceding that the legal system was prejudicial to working people, Debs explained that he could not, nonetheless, "make a lawbreaker" of himself. "I am an industrial unionist, . . . not an industrial anarchist."

The outbreak of World War I forced still more wrenching decisions. The conflict, Debs maintained, was a "capitalist" struggle, and neither the European Socialists' support of their governments nor the efforts of Berger and Hillquit to rationalize their action made it less so. "I am a citizen of the world," Debs declared. "I am opposed to every war but . . . the world-wide war of the social revolution." Too ill to run for the Presidency in 1916, he stood for Congress in Indiana, then collapsed again. In June 1918 he left his sick bed to give moral support to the "loyal comrades" imprisoned for exercising their "constitutional right of free speech" and to express his enthusiasm for the "Bolsheviki of Russia." His subsequent prosecution occurred not because he was truly seditious (the Wilson Administration deemed the case so tenuous that it tried to discourage its zealous field attorney from pursuing it), but because he was the nation's most renowned symbol of antiwar and anticapitalist sentiment.

IN THE ISOLATION of prison Debs's infatuation with Bolshevism grew stronger; and though he protested to Lenin "in the name of humanity against the execution of any of the Social Revolutionaries or the unjust denial of their liberty," he continued to support the revolution following his release. Yet he steadfastly refused to affiliate the Socialist Party with the Comintern. Finally, in 1924, two years before his death, he broke irreparably with the American Communist leadership over his endorsement of Robert M. LaFollette for President. "*Having no Vatican in Moscow to guide me,*" he acidly wrote William Z. Foster, "*I must follow the light I have.*"

This book will hardly settle a debate that began with the publication in 1906 of Werner Sombart's *Why is there no Socialism in the United States?* The ideological conflicts are too strong, the academic interests too vested. But it will certainly enrich its content. One side, the "possibilists," holds that only the repression induced by the accidents of World War I and the intrusion of alien influences in its aftermath prevented

THE WAY HOME FROM THE LAWYER'S

All this business of outliving—it is as if, once,
On a mild summer evening we were sitting outside,
Eating a few leftovers, when two great Presences
Came by, tired, and in their gentle way quite ravenous,
And we shared all of what little we had with them, and,
Not that the bottle and the few bowls refilled themselves,
But that you and I were emptied of our appetites
In that mild summer evening under the slumbering
Green of low trees, and that the departing Presences
Left us with the gift of a common moment of death.
An old story. Yet for all practical purposes,
When I go, you go—whether or not a laurel bush
And a myrtle just then spring up there outside our house.

But for all impractical purposes, you'll outlast
Me, who'll endure not in memory, merely in soft
Clay. You were around before we met (I, too, but with
That fascinating difference we keep trying to
Figure out): whatever you taught me was for your own
Survival, even though I've subsisted on it too.
Talking you up as I do among unlistening
Branches and heedless gardens, beside uncaring parked
Cars along a noisy street, may just be playing down
Your words, as if the script of summer midnight you were
Starring in were one you couldn't ever have written.
What will it be, then: a condition of evergreen?
A state of starlight? We'll consider it for a while.

JOHN HOLLANDER

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Socialism from becoming a viable force. The other, the "impossibilists" or "American exceptionalists," argues that indigenous factors doomed the movement from the beginning: the absence of a feudal tradition precluded development of a rigid class structure such as embittered European workers and intellectuals alike. The early grant of universal white male suffrage formed party loyalties that were passed on from father to son. And the high level of material prosperity, or hope of it, fostered the "embourgeoisment" of the working class.

THREE GENERATIONS of scholars have endlessly refined these propositions. In one of the more striking recent analyses, Dorothy Ross has shown that the imperatives of careerism forced academic economists to abandon their early flirtation with Socialist theory. Earlier, Marc Karson suggested that the vehement antisocialism of the Catholic Church closed the minds of its East European parishioners, the group that most nearly approximated an American proletariat. Immigration historians have long recognized that the intent of probably most of that same group to return to their native lands with their savings made them indifferent to politics and citizenship during the prewar years. "A good job," an East European remarked of his twelve-hour, seven-day week in a steel plant, "save money, work all time, go home, sleep no spend." Other specialists have documented the old stock's nativist reaction to the Socialist Party's large Jewish component in the East and insistent "Germanness" in the Midwest. Realists have always understood, furthermore, that the dirt farmers in the Southwest who gave the party its greatest prewar numerical strength (Oklahomans cast 16 percent of their vote for Debs in 1912) were populists at heart. As the leader of a New Deal cooperative in Arkansas mused a generation later, "I believe a man could stick around here for five or six years and save enough money to go off and buy himself a little hill farm of his own." No less important, historians and political scientists have agreed for years that the tendency of the major parties to preempt the less radical planks of third parties played fatefully on the pragmatic American temperament.

Salvatore addresses some of these themes directly and others implicitly in a thoughtful section that puts him in the camp of the "American exceptionalists." He affirms the conclusion of David Shannon's standard history of the Socialist Party that neither the party's internecine conflicts nor Debs's unwillingness to give organizational leadership explains the failure of Socialism in America. He argues persuasively that the movement lost such viability as it had before the United States entered the war, not, as James Weinstein contends in *The Decline of Socialism*, in the early 1920s. Assuredly, Salvatore endorses Learned Hand's observation that the United States "is a country where you are expected to conform and if you don't you are looked on with suspicion." But he rejects the thesis that either overt repression or Debs's unorthodox Marxism caused Socialism's eclipse. "Poor old Debs!" an Indiana miner lamented. "He told the people the truth, but they went on voting Democrat and Republican." They did so, Salvatore concludes, because the expectation of modest success permeated the culture and affected immigrants and old stock alike. The belief that workers would affirm a collective identity and achieve a Marxist class consciousness was thus an idle dream—one that Debs himself never believed would come to pass in his lifetime.

What, then, was the ultimate meaning of this flawed, but surely heroic, man's life? Largely this: more than any radical of his era, Debs understood the complex character of the American democratic tradition. That understanding enabled him to broaden political discourse by weaving the political and economic themes of American culture into "a credible integration of traditional values with a perceptive analysis of the class basis of industrial capitalist society." Beyond that, although Salvatore does not make the point, his values infused what Michael Harrington terms the "social democracy" of the New Deal and recent times. Above all, as the older generation of protesters against the Vietnam War can confirm, Debs left a towering legacy to conscience. Not only, in Salvatore's words, was his life "a profound refutation of the belief that critical dissent is . . . un-American or unpatriotic," it was a ringing testament that "the struggle for justice" could be grounded in a distinctly American experience. Which is to say, as Salvatore does say, that Eugene Victor Debs, for a time at least, focused "the eyes of many toward the sun."

WILLIAM H. HARBAUGH

William H. Harbaugh, who teaches at the University of Virginia, is writing a history of the years 1900-1932.

WORLDLY WIT

The London Embassy by Paul Theroux

(Houghton Mifflin, 248 pp., $13.95)

Paul Theroux made his reputation as a fashionably disenchanted chronicler of exotic outposts, but—like Ambler, Greene, and Burgess (and Kipling before them)—what has distinguished him is the brilliance and intelligence of his craftsmanship, and in particular the bland worldliness of his wit, which is the signature also of this semisequel to *The Consul's File*, from the first page of these eighteen short stories to the last.

> I liked the Dutch. They were sensible; they had been brave in the war. They still tried to understand the world, and their quaint modernism had made them tolerant. They behaved themselves. It was a church-and-brothel society

in which theology was "without much terror" and the pornography "ridiculous." And anyway "they had nice faces." The assessment is offered you with an air of such helpful and impartial courtesy that it is almost not sardonic at all. Or consider the offhand legerdemain of this capsuling of our century's chief cultural embarrassment, from one of the embassy's economists:

> 'I used to be colored, right? Then I was a Negro. And then I turned into an Afro-

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American. After that, I was just a member of a Minority Group. Now, I'm black.'

Or the equally offhand pyrotechnics of characterization: "Being with her was like reading a letter to a stranger, chosen at random from the dead-letter office." Or, "his voice had the plain splintery cadences of an Iowa Lutheran being truthful." These are not the kinds of phrases one uses in developing a character at novel length. They are an aesthetic shorthand, the epigrammatic quality of the short story at its best, except that this time round there are no ghosts, the stories in *The London Embassy* are as versatile as ever. The new consul learns about the British aristocracy fast: the delicious Hon. who finds him a flat he expects to lure her into blandly bills him for her 2 percent finder's commission and was never likely to be lured. Two giggling homosexuals get visas to peddle their lorry of antiques to California; one returns, but with a girl. An embassy colleague takes the consul temporarily to bed with her and her flatfull of pampered cats. He traps an Arab tomb-robber in the tomb. In this, Theroux's third collection, the short story looks so natural to him that it may turn out to be the form he prefers.

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For one thing, a convention of the exotic-outpost novels that were his models is that your characters have a bad time. Also, nothing happens that anybody can be amused at. The protagonist of Ambler's *Topkapi* is a derisory antihero who is beaten and gratuitously humiliated. Green's early *Confidential Agent* (a prototype for Le Carré) is middle-aged and exhausted, and Green's later heroes have bad digestions and worries about eternity. Durrell's and Naipaul's people have perhaps less parochial miseries; but of the lot of them, Peacock might have said, "No one could relate a dismal story with so many minutiae of supererogatory wretchedness," and this has been extremely popular. As it instructively should be: if your characters don't suffer, how are your readers to tell it's art?

Theroux was still working in this genre in his early (and admirable) novel *Girls At Play*—set-piece mayhem-and-misery in decolonialized East Africa, a standard scenario but brought to surprising and original life by its three unstandard main characters. But by *Saint Jack*, a couple of books later, the sardonic wit in Theroux had begun to take a hand, if not in fact take over, and if this gaudy biography of an old-China-hand pimp is a picaresque sequence rather than a novel, perhaps it was a symbol of Theroux's independence of genre.

HIS NOVELS however seem to me to have taken some odd turns. A novel is a construction within a context, but this elegant definition dissembles a vulgar pitfall: the context can so affect and overinfluence the actual composition as to distort both your characters and their ambience. What makes a character appear to "live" seems to be, essentially, its doing and saying unexpected things, and this confronts a novelist with what he may not recognize is a dilemma. When, for example, we wrote those splendid labor novels in the 1930s, clearly, for verisimilitude, our workers did what workers did do—unite, possibly shouting *Da zdrastvuet*!—but then where, and how, in characters already stock, inject the life-giving unexpectednesses? Even Dos Passos often forgot. Today too, for the average novelist, what's a peasant if not peasanty?—and so for novels about blacks, libs, Jews, Californians, and the lot. The context takes over. The characters are flat.

Theroux's novels have sometimes, it seems to me, suffered from an analogous sideslip. What made his early *Girls At Play* so astonishing from a young writer was that into a stock Africa and an action largely narrative-interest (and all done before), he transplants three women whose characters came straight out of his psyche. They then of course interacted with Africa as the story line dictated, but *nothing* they did was standard whites-in-Africa. But in Theroux's eighth book, *The Family Arsenal*, which begins in a firmly composed naturalism, the thematic nightmares of the context end by transposing the mode into what amounts to surrealism. It reads almost as if Theroux had lost control. His live characters turn to stock; preposterous uncharacters are added (Lady Arrow); the action ends in a perfect crescendo of unlikelihood.

THE EXPERIMENTS of surrealism are of course now a part of our technical heritage. And more as well: the uncritical surrealism of, for instance, Robert M. Coates's *The Eater of Darkness*, was an apprenticeship for its epochal naturalization in his *Yesterday's Burdens*, and we have had, since, Burgess's *M.F.* and in particular the South Americans' explorations of the novel as myth. But at novel length surrealism takes doing: it is in such forms as Barthelme's brilliant short stories that it flowers.

It may in fact be this surrealist side of Theroux that explains the wonderful stylistic variety and invention, the energy and fireworks, the mastery, of his short stories. One can suspend reality judgments there, as one cannot for the length of a novel; and then the new realities appear. (The trouble with *The Mosquito Coast* may well be that a short story is all the idea could stretch to.) Theroux may indeed—like Mrs. Bowen, Hemingway, and Pritchett—write better short stories than novels. But in that company, how complain?

It is a pity that mistakes in French (what *do* copyeditors speak?) make it a toss-up whether the page 227 menu of an embassy state dinner is broad parody or an author's private joke. But, either way, a "*navarin* de homard"? . . .

W. M. SPACKMAN

W. M. Spackman's new novel, *A Difference of Design*, will be published by Knopf in May.

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CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 4*

us to change our selection, nor did she or Mr. Hamilton ask me to alter my selection of Stieglitz's writings or my catalog essay. Paulson's assumption to the contrary is incorrect and unfounded.

Paulson is also incorrect in his statement that Miss O'Keeffe chose the "key set" of Stieglitz's work at the National Gallery. The key set consists of one print of *every* mounted photograph that was in Stieglitz's possession at the time of his death. Miss O'Keeffe did not edit them; her only criteria was that the works had to be mounted. (From Stieglitz's letters it is clear that he did not consider a photograph finished until it was mounted.) If several versions of the same negative existed—different types of photographic prints or various croppings—Miss O'Keeffe put all of these prints in the key set.

SARAH GREENOUGH
National Gallery of Art
Washington, D.C.

Ronald Paulson replies:
When I wrote that O'Keeffe "chose" the "key set," I was following the words of J. Carter Brown's foreword to the catalog: "she selected the finest prints for the key set." The evidence of the exhibition suggests to me that O'Keeffe not only approved but served as censor of the selection. Perhaps the censorship was internalized by the curators. Who, for example, was responsible for the omission of the remarkable photographs of Dorothy Norman? What I did not say in my review was that, whoever made the selection, the National Gallery lost an opportunity to go beyond the familiar Stieglitz to show new and surprising aspects of his photographic art.

CORRECTION:

A typographical error appeared in Leon Wieseltier's review last week of *Israeli Nuclear Deterrence* by Shai Feldman. The quotation from the author should have read: "Assuming for a moment that nuclear deterrence could be perfectly conducted and perfectly verified, would the citizens of the United States prefer the hazards and uncertainties of the pre-nuclear era?"

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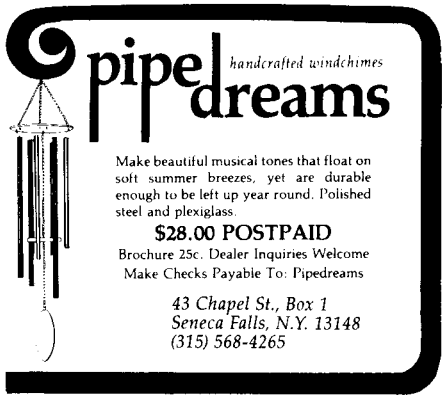
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MINNEAPOLIS DIARIST

The Grande Dame's Farewell

IT IS A CALM, cold Minnesota morning. Downtown is usually vacant and still at this time, but today there are two hundred people milling around behind the barricades at the foot of the Amfac Hotel. Some of us, mostly photographers and newspeople, are on the seventeenth floor of the Amfac, and we're freezing: the Amfac, like most of Minneapolis, is under construction, and there's little up here to shelter us. Across the street stands the old Radisson Hotel, empty, silent, a sequoia of brick and steel waiting for the ax. In decades past, when steam heat and fireproof rooms were drawing cards in the hotel business, the Radisson was the Grande Dame, the standard to which Minneapolis's hotels aspired. The hotel was defaced by renovation and devalued by its lack of modernity, so when the company announced it would blow the hotel up and build a modern hotel on the old one's site, few cared. But the name Radisson is a name with links to the city's past, and people have come to pay homage. Or watch a good explosion. For those of us shivering upstairs, the Amfac is a fine place from which to watch, but few know what Amfac stands for, or does, or where it came from. The new Amfac's pedigree is somewhat of a mystery.

LESS MYSTERIOUS—and far more disheartening—are the changes Minneapolis has wrought on itself in the last few years. Once this city possessed a modest but solid reputation as a home to good architecture; farsighted urban planning and imaginative design gave the city a look of which it could be proud. Well, no more. A boom is under way downtown, and with few exceptions, the gaping holes left by the wreckers and excavators have begotten the ugliest Leviathans to maul a city's skyline since the less-is-more mania of the '60s. A dome sprouted up almost overnight, an overbearing behemoth that, when lit, resembles a glowing wart. Parcels of prime property have been given over to City Center, a development whose size is matched only by the rancor the project has inspired. It looms fifty stories high, glowering like a medieval keep, its color the shade of mauve socks worn too long. One side faces Hennepin Avenue, the city's mildly rambunctious entertainment district. Of course there are those who don't mind the building's appearance, but they are either the project's owners (who live out of earshot, in Canada) or the building's tenants, who are fortunate enough to occupy the sole structure from which City Center cannot be seen.

IN EVERY DIRECTION, downtown Minneapolis expands *molte fortissimo* — which means that the grace notes are being drowned out daily. For years the Northwestern Bank's downtown headquarters were topped by the Weatherball, a colored orb that foretold the caprices of Minnesota's weather. Red meant warmth; white, cold; green, stasis. Blinking meant precipitation. Thousands looked to it each night; in an age where media meteorologists swing isobars and pose omnipotently over satellite photos, the Weatherball was a symbol of simplicity, a presence in the night sky that served the common good. The bank announced last fall that it would scrap the Weatherball as "inconsistent" with a new corporate image cooked up by some consultants. Public reaction brewed and simmered but never came to boil; a few columnists gave facetious eulogies and left the action unchallenged. Fire took the building on Thanksgiving Day. People were thick at the barricades as the ball blinked out for good.

THIS REMAINS a good city. Historically Scandinavian, its traditions are sober, well behaved; now a medium-sized metropolis, it is as quarrelsome, quirky, and exuberant as one expects of a town so young, so far off in the hinterland. In the summer, it is a city of lakes, with acres of beaches on which to baste oneself; in winter—well, no praises here. Minneapolitans accept winter as Venetians accept floods. And like Venice, Minneapolis has its canals—the elevated, glassed-in skyways that connect the vital organs of the city's commerce. The economy isn't throwing off sparks. Sales are down all around, unemployment is inching up, and more than a few companies have packed up moved elsewhere in search of a more accommodating business climate. But the city's health isn't mortgaged to a moribund industry like autos and steel; our economic eggs lie in several sturdy baskets, from food to banking to canny retailing. Theater thrives, and Beethoven on occasion swells from the bus shelters. One merchandiser has named this the "Minneapple," and the public, chauvinistic enough to shame a Parisian, loves the appellation. All the culture and sophistication of New York, goes the notion, without the Big Apple's drawbacks. Maybe not. Nightlife here is more of an extended dusk-life. Theaters are beginning to feel the financial pinch. The good buildings—the sturdiest incarnation of a city's identity—are being shouted down by black-sheep neighbors. The sole remaining paper (the afternoon *Star* folded last year) has neither style nor bite. Minneapolis dearly wants to join the big leagues, but it is paying for its bright, bland future with the homey singularity of its past.

THE BOMBS go off, a series of quick, muffled explosions. The Radisson splits as if cleaved by the blow of a samurai's sword. The crowd gasps; the photographers click away in unison. The left half sags, and the word RADISSON on the upper floor divides and falls. The building descends with a slow, weary grace, and a mantle of dust billows around it and spreads in all directions. On these rocks will be built a new Radisson; I've seen the plans, and they're nothing to write home about, particularly if one's parents are architects. Like the Amfac, it will be clad in glass, faced with facelessness. I look down at the crowd and wonder how many were present when the Northwestern Bank burned down, wondering how many will be present for the next demolition. Probably most. For those who are beginning to feel left behind, watching Minneapolis change has become a full-time job.

JAMES LILEKS

James Lileks is an editorial writer for the *Minnesota Daily*.

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Taxing Times

Federal tax forms have changed a lot this year. One of the least-noticed changes appears not in the forms, but in an introductory letter to the taxpayer from the Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

"Quite often," the Commissioner says in his letter, "we receive inquiries about how people may make voluntary contributions to reduce the public debt. If you should wish to contribute, just enclose in your tax return envelope a *separate* check made payable to 'Bureau of the Debt.'"

The federal government soliciting charitable contributions—that's an innovative wrinkle. One can imagine how this developed. With good natured apologies to the Commissioner, the conversation may have gone something like this:

"What's going on here?" the Commissioner barked as he made way to his office. "There's no place to walk. Everywhere I go, I'm stepping on postcards, telegrams, letters."

"They're all from taxpayers," said the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Forms. "They all want to know how to give money to the government."

"Give?"

"It seems they've all heard about the national debt. They want to do something about their country's being in the hole to the tune of a trillion-dollars."

"Do something?"

"Yessir—give money in addition to any taxes they owe. They want to know how to go about doing that."

"Well, what are you going to tell them? How are you going to answer all this stuff?" the Commissioner asked, peering behind a pile of messages.

"Those consultants we hired from the firm of Oodles, Dollops & Gollops came up with a capital idea. They suggested we include with the forms a letter explaining what to do.

The Commissioner scratched his head.

"Wait, there's more."

"More?"

"Everyone contributing over $50 gets a handsome tote bag with the Treasury Department seal embossed on the side."

"Tote bag?"

"And if you give $100, you also get this umbrella. When you open it, it says: 'I'm doing my part to cover the debt.' With $1,000 you'll get a year's subscription to the *Federal Register* so you can have a daily reading of new federal regulations and see where some of your tax money is going. If the idea really catches on, we can move the tax filing date from April 15 to December 25. People are more in the spirit of giving then."

"Whoa! I think you're taking this too far," the Commissioner said. "But I like the idea of a letter. Let's drop it from the roof of the Treasury Building and see whether it splatters."

Splatter it did—on the front cover of your tax booklet from the IRS. And if you do give, the Commissioner notes that you can treat your gift as a charitable contribution on next year's tax return.

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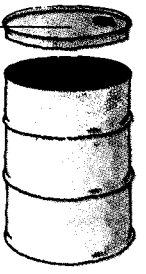
"Almost anything you can make out of anything, you can make with less energy from plastics."

"From houses to toothbrushes, plastics can do almost anything."

"It's no news that plastics are versatile," says Frank Barborek, Plastics Development Manager at Gulf Oil Chemicals Company. "Even more important perhaps is that plastics are remarkably energy-efficient.



"Petrochemicals use only about 6% of America's crude oil supply, and it's an energy bargain."

"For instance, it takes less energy to make plastic bags instead of paper bags; plastic bottles instead of glass bottles; plastic cans instead of steel cans; plastic auto hoods and trunk lids instead of aluminum.

"Many plastics are lighter than the materials they replace, so they take less energy to ship and handle. And plastic parts can make cars dramatically more fuel-efficient: there's over 230 pounds of plastic in the average late-model car, and each pound of plastic can replace up to six pounds of steel. And of course plastics don't rust.

"Most plastics are based on chemicals from petroleum; and one reason why Gulf is committed to developing other fuel sources, such as tar sands and oil shale, is to maintain a steady supply of petrochemicals for plastics.

"Only about 6% of America's crude oil supply goes into petrochemicals, and the crude oil we turn into energy-efficient plastics helps make the rest of each barrel of oil go farther. That's more energy for tomorrow."

Gulf

Gulf people: energy for tomorrow.

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